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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

JULY, 1914

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Modern Problems and the Theosophic Life.

TO supplement that part of the work of the Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society which is for members only, it is the custom to arrange for a Lecture, to which all are welcome who are sufficiently interested in the thought and activities of the Theosophical Movement to wish to come. This year, at the close of the Convention, the annals of which are to be found in the present number, such a Lecture was delivered, the title being: Modern Problems and the Theosophic Life.

The Lecturer, who spoke from thirty years' experience of the Theosophical Movement, began by saying that, a generation ago, Theosophy was a sensation; then it became a scandal; later, it came to be regarded as a body of teaching, a system of metaphysics; while, at present, those who have seen it pass through all these stages, have become convinced that Theosophy is a life. Let us suppose then, said the Lecturer, that a group of people had diligently set themselves to live that life—whose character and significance might perhaps be considered more at length later on—and had in some measure succeeded in so doing. What would be their view of some of our modern problems, their view, as the fruit of living the Theosophic Life?

To begin with, they would tend to regard all problems of life as problems of the will; the supreme problem being, to find out the Divine Will—the Will of God—and to obey that. So that their tendency would be to ask how this or that problem looked, viewed in the light of the Divine Will. And, holding that the search for the Divine Will, and obeying it, are the great matters of life, these practical students of divine things—for such is the meaning of Theosophist—would inevitably regard self-will, the assertion, that is, of one's own will against the Divine

Will, as the one indubitable evil, the greatest of all misfortunes, the infallible root of unhappiness and misery.

These practical students of divine things would, therefore, ask themselves, when they were confronted with one or another of the "burning questions" of the day, whether those who espoused one or another cause were seeking with a single heart to find and obey the Divine Will, or whether their movement was not, perhaps, a conscious or unconscious expression of self-will. If this latter, then it stood condemned, and its fruit could be nothing but confusion and misery.

What are the burning questions of our modern life? There is, to begin with, the Woman question, of which the question of equal suffrage for men and women is a minor concrete expression; there is the Labor question, growing daily more explosive in this and other countries; and there are questions of politics, of the church, of religious life. On all these, the imagined group of practical students of divine things would find themselves, by the very force and tendency of their lives, in possession of very clear and definite views. In one sense, therefore, for them these Modern Problems would not exist; they would have ceased to be problems, since their solution would have been found, not by speculation, which is always a somewhat uncertain light, but by sheer force of living, the great solver of all problems.

What view would this supposed band of students of life hold on that exceedingly controversial matter, the Woman Question? Probably, some such view as this. Holding that the one vital thing in life is to seek the Divine Will, and, finding it, to obey, they would hold, to begin with, that this is the vital thing for men and women equally. While they do this, they are safe. On all other paths, they are doomed to confusion and misery; the misery which besets any living thing which is out of harmony with its own fundamental law.

Is the motive power of the Woman Question, taking it in its largest sense, the effort to find and fulfil the Will of God? Or is it, perhaps, an expression of self-will? This is the first question which the supposed practical students of divine things would raise. And they would, perhaps, find, to their astonishment, that the prophets and prophetesses of the Woman Question have never even raised that most fundamental question, but, assuming themselves to be altogether right, have gone boldly, even wildly, ahead, pursuing their problem to all kinds of practical issues, before they have even sought for its first principle.

But, granting that the vital thing, for men and women alike, is, to seek the Divine Will, and obey it, these students of life would quickly

discern that that Divine Will has bestowed on men and women a different range of faculties; has set for them contrasted ways of obedience. For the men, the executive way; for the women, the way of inspiration. Therefore, for men, the path of obedience to the Divine Law, which is their own inherent law, is the way of executive action. For women, it is the way of inspiration. By following these contrasted, supplemental ways, they will find well-being, power, peace.

The executive way is, primarily, the expression and application of physical laws, as in the building of a house, a street, a city. The properties of substances, of wood, stone, slate, iron, are mastered and ranged under the steadying power of gravitation. To set the physical forces running through material things, ranging and ordering them, to conquer the material world by setting the will to guide and rule the natural forces: this is the executive way. Further, there comes the ranging of the wills thus applied, so that many men work together in the conquest of nature, as gangs of bricklayers on a big building, groups of structural ironworkers, a train crew, or the small army which makes up the crew of an ocean liner. The ordering of these many wills is the higher part of the executive way.

Any headway along this line can be made in one way only: the way of complete obedience to the Divine Will, as expressed in physical law and the properties of natural substances. A skyscraper can be built only by slavishly obeying the law of the strength of materials, the law of gravitation, the laws of cohesion, of strain, and so on; all direct expressions of Divine law. So the ordering of the wills of men can be successful only by obedience to the law of the will; fundamentally, by supplying these men with something they want, whether it be more evident prizes, or the simple prize of the means of physical life. But there is no headway possible without obedience; no permanent headway, without conscious obedience to the Divine law, the Will of God.

This is the executive way. Through it men come, in time, to a practical knowledge of the Will of God. To that end our multifarious industries and activities exist. What, then, is the contrasted way, the way of inspiration, the way which is natural and inherent for women, as the executive way is for men? Men, busy with the study of application of natural forces, perpetually digging, as it were, into the mountains of material substance and physical force, are in as perpetual danger of forgetting the finer, the diviner aspect of life; in perpetual need, therefore, of inspiration. Without inspiration, they will dig downwards and bury themselves in the earth; with inspiration, they will build an upward path to heaven. The task of the women is, to find and impart this inspiration to the men.

The quality of inspiration is like the quality of light. Formless itself, it makes visible all beautiful forms. Therefore, in the view of the supposed band of students of divine things, it is the part of women, not so much to dictate this or that concrete betterment, but rather to stand for the loveliness of all lovely things; and to stand for it, not so much by precept as by example; by embodying it in themselves; by presenting in their lives the beauty of holiness, the charm of all things true and lovely; by making themselves a light which shall reflect the everlasting light, the light of heaven.

At this point, the Lecturer did a rash thing. He said that, if confronted with the application of this ideal, the band of imagined students would most likely begin with the marriage service, and insist that the great word Obey, in the injunction, "to love, honour and obey" should be taken literally; that it is meant to be carried out. And, to support this unpopular doctrine, that wives should obey their husbands, he told a story which he termed a Parable. The Parable was this:

He said that the band of students of divine things were once confronted with the strange text of Saint Paul, declaring that "Woman should have authority upon her head, *because of the angels.*" Unable to solve its mystery, they deputed an angel, who had access to the courts of heaven, to carry the matter up and lay it before Saint Paul himself, and that Saint Paul, thus questioned, had answered the enigma by another enigma; that he had said: "Men are men, but women are either elementals or angels!"

What possible meaning could be attached to this dark saying? This, perhaps. Men, by the very necessity of their work, are compelled to learn obedience; obedience to natural law, to the laws of substances and forces, to laws of the will. Even if they do take their guidance from the earth, they must follow it with complete fidelity, or they must die, beaten in the daily battle with the material world. Literally, their house will tumble about their ears and bury them, if they take the least liberty, if they swerve even a little from the plumb-line of obedience. So they get their discipline day by day. What they need, is not so much discipline as inspiration.

But women, especially if they belong to the growing class who are not compelled to work, and to work steadily and hard, are without this continuing discipline. If, thus liberated, they make the fulfilment of their own wills and wishes the great purpose of their lives, then they very soon swing loose from divine law, and weave about themselves a cocoon of fancies and desires which straightway shuts them out from the realities of things and imprisons them in a net of their own

emotions, wishes and desires; which, in fact, turns them into elementals when they might be angels.

Whether they recognize it or not, they become miserable. Further, shutting out the divine light, they wholly lose the power of inspiration. Or, as the Gita puts it, "When the women become corrupted, the whole body politic goes to the devil." Something like this may, then, have been Saint Paul's meaning. There must be a steady pressure of authority upon the woman's personality, to save her from the danger of becoming a slave to her own self-will, which is a cause of misery for her and which shuts out the divine light that should pass through her, leaving mankind in darkness. Because of the angels, therefore, that they are meant to be, they should have authority upon their heads.

And the Lecturer said further that, once a woman recognized this, and, finding the right man, set herself to obey him, she found a double happiness; happiness for herself; happiness for him. For she became to him the light and source of inspiration, the embodiment of the loveliness of all lovely things, because, through an obedience which kept her personality in check, she gave her soul a chance to blossom like the rose, to make its own loveliness shine through her, irradiating her with everlasting charm, filling her heart with inspiration.

Why, if this be so, do not women find the right man, and, finding him, obey, and thus open for themselves and him the door of joy? Because, said the Lecturer, the men have lost the power, because they have lost the right to command. Through their infidelity, their cowardice, the lowness of their ideals, they have so buried themselves in the earth that the power is gone from them. It becomes impossible to obey them, whereas, if they responded to divine law, it would be impossible not to obey them. Therefore the primary responsibility for the vagaries, the anarchy, of the modern Woman Movement, lies not with the women but with the men. It is the reversal of the story in Genesis. The man has fallen and has led the woman into anarchy after him.

From him, therefore, must come the first steps in obedience. He must set himself to seek, to love, to reverence, to adore, the Divine law, the Will of the Father, bending every energy of his nature to the task of finding that law and obeying it. Then, little by little, as he finds and obeys, he will win back his birthright, rise once more from the earth and stand upright, so that any woman will be not only willing but even joyful to obey him, obeying in him the law of God made manifest. Not the Christ alone, but every man, should thus be a Divine Incarnation, as every woman should embody the healing, illumining power of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.

Here the Lecturer followed one act of rashness by another. Having already somewhat broadly hinted that the fervid apostles and prophetesses of "Votes for Women" were, in the view of the supposed group of students of divine things, merely woolgathering, he lost the chance to make peace with their enemies by saying that, in this view, which he evidently shared, the Anti-suffrage advocates, if of the feminine persuasion, were in even worse case. For they were even more completely self-deluded. Playing politics, building up mannish associations, delivering platform orations, writing long controversial letters to the papers, plunging into pamphleteering, they showed an equally fundamental misunderstanding of the true nature of their sex, its true destiny and power. Could it be said that the harangue of an Anti-Suffrage oratress was the embodiment of the loveliness of all lovely things, which, by its very radiance, would win men's heart's to the beauty of holiness?

The Lecturer tried to make the matter clearer by a comparison. Take the whole substance of poetry, he said, and consider it as, in a sense, the substance of inspiration, an embodiment of beauty and charm, making visible and tangible the loveliness of all lovely things. Do the poets gain their power, does poetry gain its power, by insisting argumentatively on this or another concrete reform? Or is it not the case, on the contrary, that, the moment poetry enters the arena of controversy and lends itself to a Cause, it loses all its force and becomes mere rhymed pamphleteering, however melodious—like some of Shelley's didactic poems? The true power of poetry lies elsewhere than in the espousal of any concrete "reform." It lies in so flooding and suffusing men's hearts with beauty, that all right and noble actions will become instinctive to them.

So with the power of women, the power of inspiration, which they can only enter into through the lowly door of obedience. They will gain and wield the power to inspire, by embodying in themselves the loveliness of all lovely things; by making that loveliness visible and present, in their beauty, in their charm, in the fine loveliness of spirit which illumines and inspires and heals; which so floods the heart of man with the joy of its loveliness that there is no room there for what is base and gross.

Therefore "woman should have authority on her head because of the angels." Therefore she should obey. But man must obey first, and, to obey, he must cease to be such a coward. This, said the Lecturer, is the pre-eminent vice of modern men, the vice which, more than any other, has robbed them of their birthright, the divine right to be obeyed. Take the gross sin of drunkenness. Does this come of cowardice? In reality, yes. The man is afraid of his moods, afraid of his thoughts, afraid of his duties, afraid most of all of his own

cowardly heart. Therefore he drinks, not primarily to produce temporary paralysis of the legs, but to fill his muddled head with delusions, delusions about himself, delusions about life, delusions as to his own heroic might. This, like every vice, is an expression of cowardice.

The Lecturer, in speaking of the power to exact obedience, had used the words "divine right." Did this imply that the imagined band of practical seekers after divine things desired the resurrection of that antiquated and discredited doctrine, "the divine right of kings?" The Lecturer came at this indirectly. If a woman, who, as a woman, was worth her salt, found the right man, the man, loyal and courageous, who set himself early and late to seek the divine will and obey it, fearless of death or danger to himself, would she not be constrained to obey him? Would she not find the greatest joy in obeying him? For the heart of woman yields instinctive homage to courage, as the heart of man yields homage that will never die to purity.

If then, in like manner, a tribe or a nation should find a man who, with loyalty and unflinching courage, sought the divine will, and, through a happy quality of light and power in his heroic soul, not only sought that law but found it, found it in such fulness that he could interpret and follow the divine law not only for the personal problems of his separate life or the separate lives of others, but for the large, general problems of his race and nation, would not that race gladly and instinctively follow him, thus recognizing in him a divine right, nay, even that antiquated and discredited thing, the divine right of kings?

So the word of the enigma is Obey, Obey and Obey. And, since Obedience is the golden key which opens the door of heaven, so anarchy, the determination at all costs to obey one's own wishes only, is the iron key of hell. Anarchy is the malady of our times. Not merely destructive lawlessness, but the subtler thing that leads to lawlessness: the conviction that, for each, his own wish should be paramount; that, in this sense, the sense of following out his own wish, he is expressing his true individuality. For the truth is that, never shall we express our real selves, our true individualities, in any way but the one way: a faithful seeking and following of the will of God, the deeper will and law of our natures, to which the lower, surface will is always opposed, as the present is always opposed to the larger, higher promise of the future.

So that this worship of one's own wish, this modern anarchy, is a delusion, a thorough-going violation of the deeper law, the law along which alone our real evolution can take place. We must ceaselessly sacrifice the present and the ease and comfort of the present to

the greater future. So we must ceaselessly sacrifice the lesser and lower will in us to the greater: the personal will to the will of God.

All obedience is training for that, and the only effective training. Therefore the modern Labor movements, which take as their ideal not obedience, but ease and comfort, are as false and misleading as the Feminist movement. Both take their stand upon self-will, upon the worship of self-satisfaction; but Evolution, the great divine law of growth from lower to higher, from less to greater, from the natural and human to godlike, builds not upon ease and self-satisfaction but on sacrifice, on valorous obedience to the greater, deeper will, the obedience which always offers up today on the altar of tomorrow.

So the practical seekers after divine things find their problems solved. Seeking first to obey, and not to satisfy themselves, they stumble on the secret of happiness and joy, of true development and growth. And, since their obedience rests in no ephemeral law, but in the everlasting Law of God, they enter, through obedience, into the everlastingness of that law, opening, with the golden key of Obedience, the door of heaven and immortality.

PRECEPTS OF IYEYATEE.

"Life is like unto a long journey, with a heavy load. Let thy steps be slow and steady, that thou stumble not. Persuade thyself that imperfection and inconvenience is the natural lot of mortals, and there will be no room for discontent, neither for despair. When ambitious desires arise in thy heart, recall the days of extremity thou hast passed through. Forbearance is the root of quietness and assurance forever. Look upon wrath as thy enemy. If thou knowest only what it is to conquer, and knowest not what it is to be defeated, woe unto thee! It will fare ill with thee. Find faults with thyself rather than with others. Better the less than the more."

Translated by Prof. K. Wadagatti, of the Imperial University.

FRAGMENTS

From a letter to a Lay Chela:

"Believe neither the turmoil of your emotions nor the restless hunger of your heart,—these with time will pass: but rest assured that joy lies in the depths of life, that happiness enfolds us, and that darkness and shadow are unreal and passing. When the gloom settles upon the soul, and you feel the chill twilight gathering, wait patiently. Even the night has its stars, will we but raise our eyes to heaven; and sure, beyond all failing, the sun rises with another day at its appointed hour, and in the warmth of sunshine and brightness earth seems born anew.

"I remind you but of what you know. Nevertheless I bid you, when the darkness gathers, summon courage to face it, patience to bear it, and the faith that knows the dawn is waiting and knows it cannot fail. For God is love; and the law, compassion absolute. Dare you then to say this is not so? That you are signalled out for misery alone?

"O eyes so blinded by your tears! O poor heart, rent with pain and suffering! You have not seen into the depths of life, nor tasted the last drop within the cup, for those who taste have found it sweet. What is the path the Masters have trod, think you? Woe unutterable, we call it: but they will tell you that in its very sorrow lies a joy; and in its sacrifice, reward for all their hopes. Not alone we walk, nor unregarded. The Master's eye notes all, and His pity and His love enwrap each toiler like a garment. Courage and patience, then, and ever, ever forward. Some day the light will shine and peace console you, and I shall greet the radiance of your knowledge which will tell me all is well.

"Lo! like a bugle call across the ocean of physical existence, they bid us know—those who have 'gone before'—that all *is* well. And we may trust those words of theirs, and following the path that they have shown, loosen the bonds of ignorance and illusion, and stand some day where now they stand, in full soul-consciousness, and know that it is bliss."

* * * * * * * *

From the letter of a Master:

"Softly the daylight dies, and the flaming light of the sunset fades in the Western sky. The planet shows above: a silver spark in a sea of violet. Three homing birds—black silhouettes—pass across. The freshness of falling dew is in the air; the scent of grass and earth and hidden flowers. A stir of insect life arises, reminiscent of vague memories, growing more even in its cadences as the light grows more dim. The day has been full of care and pressure—

cross purposes—unfulfilled plans. To-morrow I turn to the mountains again, taking D— with me. The mountains! how I have longed for them and their uplifting peace. My blessing upon you, child of the loyal heart. Keep the flower in your bosom fresh. Treasure all within your heart—both from above and from below. I always visit you there: there you come always to me: there lies mirrored the vision of the everlasting snows,—their keen, pure air, the sanctity of their silences. Keep that vision before your eyes. So shall others see it, even if in their blindness they cannot see. So shall those darkened lives be touched by some of their exaltation. Live forever upon those heights, wherever your feet may tread. Hush. Good-night. My peace—and theirs—I give you."

* * * * * * * *

Notes from a talk given by one of the Masters to certain Chelas of the Master K. H.:

"I do not ask any of you to live on *the* summits: that were, as yet, to ask too much. But I do ask you all to live on the summits of *your own* attainment. This each one can do.

"Be unfaltering in your remembrance of the *privilege of service*. Nothing is so great. It is the highest boon that the most spiritual beings ask, the hall-mark of discipleship, the crowning glory of adeptship. You, disciples, who strive forward to the hour of Initiation, who have learnt by much sacrifice, and tasted in many communions somewhat of the meaning of that event, realize that for you there can be no fatigue, no possibility of discouragement, no sense of being overburdened, no fear of responsibility. These so-called burdens are essential attributes of service, and each one must be welcomed with reverent gratitude and joy. Only under the pressure of incessant service can the disciple grow. Does fatigue follow? Look deep within yourselves for needed adjustments here. At the service last night I noticed indications of strain. These mean but one thing: weak points. What has a disciple to do with weak points? Consider this. Discover the disharmony in your natures. Purify. Discipline. Re-adjust. Each such spot is a centre of contagion for the whole group.

"The world behind you is praying for helpers none the less fervently because its prayers are dumb. Labour unremittingly, therefore, that you may attain the power to aid them: lifting them,—and so carrying part of that common weight of care and responsibility which your Master serenely bears, and which it is your privilege to share."

CAVÉ.

LETTERS TO FRIENDS

X

Dear Friend:

I HAD hoped that I might be able to see you again before I left, but this morning's mail shows me that my hope was vain and that if our interrupted conversation is to be continued it must be by letter instead of face to face.

At first, I was sorry for this; for so much more can be said than can be written. Sometimes, indeed, I wonder at the temerity that dares to write upon any real or vital theme. The chance is so small that the written word should ever tell the truth. Did not you yourself quote to me that passage from *Virginibus Puerisque* in which Stevenson reminds us that it takes two to tell the truth,—one to speak and one to hear? Who can know how what is written will be read, or through what moods it will be interpreted to the understanding? As for your moods, dear man, they are as stable as April weather. If I send you my messenger wrapped in mackintosh and with my best umbrella, he is as likely as not to find you hatless and coatless basking in brilliant sunshine. Whereas if I deck him gaily in straw hat and white flannels he will meet you miles from any shelter, drenched and shivering in a Northeast gale. In conversation one's umbrella can be put up and down, and one's mackintosh be put on and off, as occasion may demand. But in a letter one has no such freedom. One is sewed up in one's garments as permanently as the traditional Laplander,—and often as unpleasantly. "The perception that it is my own cow will not stop the arrow sped under the delusion that it was a ferocious tiger." Could even George Fox "speak to your condition" if he had to speak some twenty-four hours in advance?

Yet as I thought over our last conversation, I realized that these difficulties, real as they are, might serve my turn, and make my point more clearly than anything I could say if we were talking at our ease. For now, if you are to understand me at all, you will have to put some of my counsel into practice; and instead of listening lazily to my description of a certain mental attitude, you will have yourself to take it. As I cannot adjust my words to your mood, you must even adjust your mood to my words, and prove to yourself, what I have always told you, that you can rule and use your moods, instead of being ruled and used by them.

This, then, is what I want you to do. Go back, in thought, to the real beginning of our friendship,—to that scorching day in early June when I called at your office in the city, and we walked together to the subway. Take that walk with me again, in memory. Be once more

jostled by that hot, perspiring crowd. Wend your way between the packing cases that blocked the sidewalk. Climb over the skids and ropes which ran from the brewer's truck at the curb. Wait, on the narrow wooden bridge spanning the excavation in the street, till the procession of surface cars, trucks, delivery wagons, and motors leaves an opening through which we can dodge. Hear the metallic clank and grind and roar of the elevated train, and the pound of its flat wheels; the deafening hammering of the pneumatic riveters on the building going up beside us; and the shrill yelling of the newsboys on the corner. Take into your nostrils the smell of gas from the open ditch and the fetid odor from the crowd. Be blinded by the glare of sunshine, and dizzy from the blood driven to your head by heat radiating from baked walls and pavement. Feel again, as you felt that day, the outrage to every sense and nerve in your body, till you turned and swore at the pasty-faced, unhealthy looking clerk who ran full tilt against you, and who only spat indifferently as he hurried on. Recall your feeling as you looked after him, with twitching face and hands, and then suddenly beckoning to me, dived down a side street and stopped before a little church all but buried beneath the loft buildings which towered beside it.

Do you remember the half shame-faced, half whimsical look you gave me as you pushed open the leather-padded door that shut off its cool, dark quiet from the inferno of the street? You said nothing: gave no explanation, knowing that none was needed; but stood for a moment till your eyes grew used to the darkness, broken only by the white gleam of the marble altar, the dim red lamps before it, and, high above, the many hued glow of a rose window. You led me along the stone aisle, between the empty rows of seats, to the one small recessed chapel on the right,—so small that there was scarcely room for the four chairs that had been placed in it. There we sat, in silence.

I want you to sit there again with me, feeling again as you did then. Do you remember that after a little while we knelt,—in prayer as silent as that silent church, and as full of benediction and of healing peace?

It may have been ten minutes that we stayed there,—perhaps fifteen, —I do not know. But I recall, as probably you do not now, the amazing thing you said to me as the door swung to behind us: "I have not been here for a year. It is the one place I know that has no walls. In it, one is on a mountain top,—alone under the glory of God's stars."

I did not answer, and you did not speak again, for we were once more in the noise of the street, in the pushing, hurrying crowds, the smells, the blinding glare and stifling heat. But though these were unchanged you were changed. The nervous, tortured look was gone from your face, and I think you noticed your surroundings not at all. You moved serenely, choosing your way unconsciously and unhesitatingly, and the pavement seemed always clearest just before you. You were not thinking of these things or of yourself, and could not have noticed them or now remember them. But I both noticed and

remembered. And you, I know, can recall the mood you then were in, and the contrast to what it had been a short fifteen minutes before. I want you to recall it.

If you have done so,—if, feeling after feeling and mood by mood, you have lived over again in memory the contrasting thoughts and emotions that succeeded one another in that brief half hour,—then I can say what I have in mind to say, both briefly and with some fair chance that it may not be wholly false.

My first point is this: in re-inducing in yourself the attitude of mind and heart and will that was yours in that little chapel, and in feeling again its silent aspiration, which drew your soul to prayer, you have been meditating.

You have told me that you cannot meditate. The truth is that you, and every man, are always meditating. The question is only upon what you meditate. Memory, imagination, thought and feeling,—when are they ever silent? When are we not desiring something, feeling something, thinking something? This combined activity of thought, feeling and desire is meditation. It is the most continuous and the most intimately familiar process of consciousness,—and the most potent.

You may object that this is not what you have meant by meditation, when you said you could not meditate; and that it is not what religious writers mean when they counsel meditation, for it would be obviously absurd to counsel that which is by its very nature always taking place. It is true that between the unpurposed broodings, which form the ever changing yet continuous background of our consciousness, and such meditation as devotional treatises describe, there is a marked difference. But this difference is one of direction and of degree. As processes the two are the same. If, as I have so often seen you do, you sketch idly while you listen to me talk, you are prohibited from claiming that you cannot hold a pencil and do not know what it means to draw. You may draw well or badly, things hideous or beautiful; but draw you can, and meditate you can. The process by which you recalled and felt again all the hideousness of those glaring streets and pushing crowds was precisely the same as that which brought back to you the peace and benediction of that darkened, silent church. The power is yours to invoke what scenes, what thoughts, what feelings you will; and the act of invocation is the act of meditation, regarded as a purposed instead of an unpurposed process.

If you still object that what you have just done was only to invoke the past through memory, whereas if meditation is truly the gateway to new consciousness it must depend upon the power of imagination, I reply that between memory and imagination there is no such difference as you suppose. It may be, as Plato seems to hint, that imagination is but the memory of the soul. Do you recall the day when motoring we came upon and caught a runaway horse, and we sat and waited by the roadside for the farmer's team which we had passed a mile or

more before? In imagination you pictured its arrival; else we would not have waited for it. But this imagination was based on memory. So the swift flight of the soul's consciousness from the world of spirit to the world of matter, from the potential to the manifest, may outstrip the slow, sure movement of evolution and of growth, and, seeing the future in the present, by both memory and imagination, prepare the way for it, and aid it to come into its own.

But such a discussion is beside the mark. You have imagination, no less than memory. You have never been to Chinon,—never at least in this life. Yet in imagination you can take your stand upon its ruined battlements, and look down upon the swiftly flowing Vienne, the stretch of meadow beyond the fringe of willows on its further bank, the encircling hills, dark with woods and vineyards, and the long white road that winds between them. You can make time cease, and live again in the age of chivalry. As you stand and watch, you can catch, far off on the crest of the hills, the glimmer of the sun reflected from burnished lance heads, and trace a low moving cloud of dust. You can feel in heart and mind and will the spirit of France in her extremity, overrun by the armies of her enemies, despoiled of her fairest provinces, betrayed, humiliated, beaten, hemmed in on every side, yet ablaze with the new hope and indomitable courage kindled from the divine fire and all giving devotion which flames through the heart of Joan of Arc. Yes, without turning, without taking your eyes from that advancing, lengthening cloud of dust, big with unknown issues of combat or of succor, you can see her kneeling in that now roofless chapel, communing with her "Brothers in Paradise," and drawing from "great Michael, Prince of God's chivalry," the strength and wisdom for the saving of her nation and the crowning of her King. And as you see her thus, that slim girlish figure in its page's dress, her dark hair cut level with her shoulders, her full, free throat, and upturned, tear-stained face, radiant with the love and adoration shining through it, something of her spirit passes into you, and you know yourself strong to meet, with her, whatever may befall. By imagination, no less than by memory, you can make your own what time, what environment, what consciousness you will. That this is within your power is my first point.

My second point is that there is nothing you can do which is more important, and which has more dynamic and lasting effects upon your life, than to meditate,— than to invoke, by set purpose and act of will, those thoughts, feelings and desires which are purifying and strengthening. I do not think I need to argue this point at length. In your own experience, which I began by asking you to recall, you have proof enough, if you but reflect upon its significance. Let us grant, for the moment only, that it is not what a man is, but rather what he does that is important. Let us think only of his work among his fellow men, in his business or profession; or his duty to his family and in his own home. Still I say that there is nothing more important, to the right

performance of such work or duty, than right meditation. For right meditation enables us to come to our work in the right spirit, and in no other spirit can we do our work as it should be done. This is surely so trite and so obvious that not even your mind will venture to question it. Why then do you not act upon it?

Partly because it requires effort. We can no more change the current and direction of our moods, without effort, than we can change, without the exertion of force, the course of any moving mass. Our moods have a real momentum; and most of us, unfortunately, an equally real inertia of the will. It seems so much easier to let our moods possess us than to dominate them. We wait until they pass, or until something "happens" to change them. And so we drift, blinding ourselves, where we can, to the dissonance between our mood and the spirit which we know our work requires if it is to be done as it should be done.

But in reality it takes less effort to change a wrong mood in its inception, than it does to drag ourselves against its opposition through the routine of the day. No one needs to be told the value of hope and courage in times of stress and trial, nor how heavy are the burdens which are carried with a heavy heart. It is infinitely worth while to lighten our hearts when we cannot lighten our burdens, and to take hope and courage for our companions when we know we shall have to fight. Each morning, by meditation, we can attune ourselves to the day that lies before us, and make our own whatever spirit we may need. On the calendar, before me as I write, are these words: "It costs more to maintain one vice than ten virtues"; and the labor, if it be such, of meditation is far less than that which is the cost of our undominated moods.

Now I can hear you cry out at me in utter exasperation: What on earth has come to the man, that he should be writing in such a solemn way that it is better to be courageous than cowardly, cheerful than depressed! As if I and every one else did not know it without his telling! And simply because, when he reminds me of it, I can put myself back in memory to ten minutes of peace, or imagine myself in his old castle of Chinon, he seems to think I can control all my feelings, and purr sweetly when some one steps on my tail and rubs my fur the wrong way.

I do not know about the purring, but I do mean precisely that you can induce in yourself and maintain any mood or any state of feeling that you desire, and that you can do this with no more difficulty, and much less irritation, than you have experienced in reading this letter. Dear man, is there any mood, any feeling, which you would wish to have, which has not been depicted and exemplified over and over again in the literature of religion or of history? In the poets or in the writings of the saints? You are able to read, and to make live in your own consciousness that which you read; to use your memory, your understanding, your imagination and your will to open your heart, first to the contagion of your author and then to the living reality of which he writes, till its spirit floods your own and arouses your desire and your

will to show it forth in act. In that will is the fruit of your meditation. Without it all that you have done is little more than dreaming. But with it meditation becomes the most dynamic of life's acts.

This then is the meaning of my second point. If you would do your work effectively and fulfil rightly and happily the duties that are yours, look forward in the morning to what lies before you in the day, and make up your mind what qualities and feelings will best enable you to meet it. Then take from your shelves one book or another and turn to those passages which embody the feeling you desire. Dwell upon them, meditate upon them, live them; and set your will to the task of making their spirit live in you and in your acts. The time you give to this will be well spent and more than paid back throughout your day.

My letter is already too long, and I have not fulfilled my hope that I could say briefly what I had to say. Therefore I can only indicate my third point. You must find its implications for yourself. It is not true that what a man does is more important than what he is. His work lives only as he lives, and with such life as is his. The only gift we can make is the gift of ourselves, and all that is of importance to us or to our fellows or to God is what we are. I reminded you of what you said to me as we left that church: "It is the one place I know that has no walls. In it, one is on a mountain top, alone under the glory of God's stars." You proved that day that it is not intercourse with men that fits us to move easily and helpfully among them, but that it is intercourse with God. There is no universal brotherhood save through the Father of us all. But deeper and more vital than that is this truth: we can only come to ourselves as we come to the Master. In and through Him only do we come to a being "that has no walls", where we are ourselves, and all of ourselves, because in communion with Him who is in Himself all. This communion you know and have experienced. It is yours for the taking,—as it was yours to enter when you would that cool and silent church, shut off from all the city, yet bringing you to peace with all your fellows and open without walls.

Do you wonder that I thought it amazing when you told me it was a year since you had been there? And that I deem it still more amazing you should seek so seldom to enter the temple in your own heart, for which the little church stood as symbol?

Faithfully yours,

JOHN GERARD.

BERGSON'S PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION

X

IT would be a bold man who would attempt to make Bergson clearer than he himself is; and yet so manifold are the subjects with which he has dealt, and so comprehensive his range, that no article suitable for a magazine could examine them all. A selection, therefore, has to be made of those features which seem most characteristic and at the same time of most general interest. Professor James wrote in *A Pluralistic Universe*—"I have to confess that Bergson's originality is so profuse that many of his ideas baffle me entirely. I doubt whether anyone understands him all over, so to speak; and I am sure that he himself would be the first to see that this must be, and to confess that things which he himself has not yet thought out clearly had yet to be mentioned, and have a tentative place in his philosophy." We shall, then, endeavor to present Bergson's world-theory, "Creative Evolution"—which he uses as the title for his greatest book,—together with certain of the arguments he uses to deduce this theory. We shall also discuss some of the conclusions to be drawn from this conception relative to the soul and its destiny, and attempt to determine the lasting features of Bergson's philosophy and his true philosophical position. Above all, it must be remembered that Bergson's *method,* as opposed to the intellectual systems of his predecessors, is the heart and center of his contribution, that for which he will be remembered rather than for any one original idea. Some of these ideas, however, are very suggestive of the philosophy advanced by Madame Blavatsky and often called Theosophy. It was this that first attracted the writer to Bergson; and it would be gratifying to think that Theosophical ideas had so permeated the Western world's atmosphere as the result of the labors of the Society, that an intuitional philosopher could find them available in his search after the Divine Wisdom.

Since the spiritual life is, in one of its aspects, an intellectual life, whatever simplifies and clarifies and advances thought is a help to the spiritual life. Bergson's undertaking is, therefore, by no means merely an intellectual luxury; and especially is this so because he does not make it necessary for us to become intellectual acrobats in order to attain some certainty of knowledge, some spiritual freedom. This very achievement is the logical outcome of the spiritual background which is the

basis of his philosophy; it is only those who lack this *point d'appui* that get lost in the endless meshes of intellect. Bergson has tried to take man as he is, leaving out no part of his nature. Taking as a fulcrum that plane of consciousness in himself which he *knew* to be most real, he has raised the whole thinking process by constructing a method of direct approach to this plane, itself super-intellectual and spiritual. To him philosophy is essentially a struggle to rise above one-sided ideas, the false moulds in which our minds are encased and have become hardened. He has sought to gather the whole of the mind together, so to speak, and to place it in its true position as subordinate to the will and higher consciousness of man. And conceiving the mind to hold such a place, he has attempted to make a thorough-going exposition in terms of ordinary thinking of the method each must apply to himself in order to reach this same detached position. Once having attained, we can turn about on the mind and use it without being any longer deceived by its limitations. Then, each one can and should discover his own truth;—intellect checking up and mapping out the way intuition has pioneered.

Bergson's interpretation of his intuitions about life, evolution, and the spiritual world is, of course, but another human effort, subject to errors and limitations. But Bergson knows this perfectly well, and to those who accuse him of leaving many great problems unsolved he answers that an adequate philosophy will be itself an evolution. In other words we must grow towards and into the Wisdom Religion, to *Theosophia,* and no one philosopher can perform this service for the race once for all. "A philosophy of this kind will not be made in a day. Unlike the philosophical systems properly so called, each of which was the work of a man of genius and sprang up as a whole, to be taken or left, it will only be built up by the collective and progressive effort of many thinkers, of many observers also correcting and improving one another. So the present essay does not aim at resolving at once the greatest problems. It simply desires to define the method and to permit a glimpse, on some essential points, of the possibility of its application" *(Creative Evolution, XIV).* Bergson's critics would do well to remember this passage in his Introduction.

In Creative Evolution we get a term that as nearly as possible expresses the heart of the Bergsonian conception of reality. Our philosopher tells us frankly that he has gazed intently at reality, and that no mental machinery is capable of giving a true picture of what the consciousness knows and perceives at such times. In order to interpret the experience, however, he has endeavored to describe what he sees in terms of life. His vision is that of a great life flowing through time. This life-current is the fundamental reality, and is spirit in antithesis to matter. The material universe is "the ebb of this great flow"; is a flux and not a thing. Thus a given instance of life is, so to speak, an inversion of the spiritual process, and is losing its vitality. It is existence almost without duration in comparison with the whole from which

it was pushed; for duration or timelessness, as the finite intellect conceives time, is of the very stuff of this coursing life. Bergson states and restates his thought in many ways, for he cannot escape using terms which others have applied differently, and he does not wish to be misunderstood. Life, he says, is tendency, is an irresistable internal push, which, if it relaxed its tension would sink into gross materiality. "Life is creation, the material is reality unmaking itself." "The real can pass from tension to extension and from freedom to mechanical necessity by way of inversion. Life is an effort to remount the incline that matter descends." Again he pictures life as an immense wave that flows through and organizes matter—"sometimes turned aside, sometimes divided, always opposed; and the evolution of the organized world is the unrolling of this conflict." Bergson warns us, however, not to be misled by his similies, which are but the best images that the physical can give. "In reality," he expressly says, "life is of the psychological order." Again, "Consciousness or supra-consciousness, is at the origin of life."

Evolution, as we look out or back upon it, is the unfolding of this life-force throughout the ages. It has met and overcome obstacles; it has also been checked, and appears even to have failed of its purpose. For Bergson clearly believes that evolution does not *of necessity* imply progress, and that it is sometimes conforming to our ideals and sometimes quite antagonistic to them. He also sees that the unity of life is to be found in the original impulse, which contained within itself the many tendencies which are differentiated in the course of development. Thus this original "sheaf" of tendencies is manifested in vegetation; in ants, bees, and wasps; differently again in other animals; while the best of its capacities are developed in man. In some of the great lines of evolution Bergson feels that he has found "blind alleys," and also many cases of retrogression.

The most interesting expressions of this original impulse, this *poussé vitale,* are to be found in the vegetative, instinctive, and rational life-streams, which are conceived not as successive degrees or stages of development, but as "divergent directions of an activity that has split up as it grew. The difference between them is not a difference of intensity, nor, more generally, of degree, but of kind,"—a view, as he says, contrary to that held since Aristotelian days. On the subject of matter, Bergson is equally original. "Matter," he says, "was life originally." That is, the cosmical *élan* which is life, conscious or supra-conscious reality, is a current that ceaselessly flows. When it turns backward, when for some unexplained reason the direction of the flow is reversed, the result is that flux we call matter. "Life is a reality which is making itself, matter is the same reality in the process of unmaking." Matter is real, but it is derivative and perishing. Matter and life or spirit are one in origin but different in degree. Spirit "is confronted with matter, that is to say, with the movement which is the inverse of its own

and which is necessity itself. But it seizes on this matter and strives to introduce into it the largest possible amount of indetermination and freedom."

Over this matter the life-force has obtained various kinds of control, has succeeded in moulding it so as to form vehicles for self-expression. As men have not received all that life has to offer, so we may conclude that the possibilities of the future are boundless. Men have intellect and self-consciousness and free-will: in this they transcend the torpor of vegetation and the instinct of animals. Ants, bees, and wasps, however, have the instinctive powers developed far in advance of mankind. To quote from *Creative Evolution* again: "It is as if a vague and formless being, whom we may call, as we will, man or super-man, had sought to realize himself, and had succeeded by abandoning a part of himself on the way. The losses are represented by the rest of the animal world, at least in what these have that is positive and above the accidents of evolution . . . Consciousness has unloaded on them whatever encumberances it was dragging along, and so it has been enabled to rise, in man, to heights from which it sees an unlimited horizon open again before it. It is true that it has not only abandoned cumbersome baggage on the way; it has also had to give up valuable goods. Consciousness, in man, is preëminently intellect. It might have been, it ought, so it seems, to have been also intuition. Intuition and intellect represent two opposite directions of the work of consciousness: intuition goes in the very direction of life, intellect goes in the inverse direction, and thus finds itself naturally in accord with the movements of matter. A complete and perfect humanity would be that in which these two forms of conscious activity should attain their full development." These passages speak for themselves, and, as will be seen, further quotation will give the clearest exposition possible on these points, as well as affording a glimpse of the charm and lucidity of Bergson's style. "In the humanity of which we are a part, intuition is almost completely sacrificed to intellect. It seems that to conquer matter and to reconquer its own self, consciousness has had to exhaust the best part of its power. This conquest, in the particular conditions in which it has been accomplished, has required that consciousness should adapt itself to the habits of matter and concentrate its attention on them, in fact determine itself more especially as intellect." This limitation of our powers will be, and Bergson thinks ought to be, overcome when we give up confining ourselves to purely conceptual thinking, and allow our latent instinctive nature, developed until it becomes intuition, to become the normal center of our consciousness. As it is, our intuition "glimmers only now and then . . . But it glimmers wherever a vital interest is at stake." Philosophy ought not to ignore these too often fleeting intuitions; on the contrary, it ought "to sustain them, then to expand them, and so unite them together. The more it advances in this work, the more it will perceive that intuition is mind itself [Higher Manas], and, in a certain sense, life itself; the intel-

lect has been cut out of it by a process resembling that which has generated matter. Thus is revealed the unity of the spiritual life." Bergson follows these very remarkable assertions by a statement that has great significance, that shows the sureness with which he has grasped the reality of inner things, and that we hope will be acted upon by his many followers and not merely made food for thought. He says that if we wish to be "complete men," that is,—if we wish a spiritual life that shall be both intellectual and intuitional we must first use the intuitional method; because, he points out, it is easy enough to go from intuition to intellect, but if we start with the intellect and try "to think our way back to insight into life," we shall find, as men have always found, that we are attempting the impossible, "for from the intellect we shall never pass to intuition." Philosophy is to be no longer, then, a science of speculation and brain-spinning; but it is to return to, and use, those higher faculties in man which are the modes of expression of our truer, spiritual selves. "Philosophy introduces us thus into the spiritual life."

In his conception of the nature and function of the intellect, Bergson has followed almost entirely the view-point taken by the East. Mind is but the instrument that effects an adjustment between the inner, conscious ego and the world of manifestation about it. Mind deals with the material aspects of existence, and its concepts or "thought-frames" apply admirably in practical life and in physical science. The trouble comes when we try to apply this method to a living, flowing reality,—to life. We try to treat the living like the lifeless, and in so doing make the unwarrantable assumption that a mechanistic outline can fit an organic growing world. In our endeavor, we have learned to represent life by a "cinemetographical mechanism of thought," that is, a rapid succession of instantaneous static pictures;—but this is not the same thing as life itself, and never can be. Conceptual thinking about life, says Bergson, is not even scientific; for science, when it seeks to understand something, studies it directly. But the mind is incapable of doing this with life; it can only deal with static, inert, conceptual forms or frames, and can at best only form a hopelessly limited and inexact reproduction of the truth.

In the Bergsonian world-view, then, there is the idea of a great Life-current of consciousness which has penetrated matter, and which is gradually organizing it. Mind, in its totality, is the complementary powers of instinct and intellect. So far the Life-current has not succeeded in giving complete manifestation to, or in combining perfectly these forms of consciousness. Man is endowed mostly with intellect and some instinct; ants, bees, and wasps have mostly instinct with some "fringe of intelligence." The effort of the mind to grapple with difficulties has produced self-consciousness; consciousness is most intense when we face ourselves and exert our wills in some power of choice. Will is the direct action of consciousness, of the vital impulse. The reason we (of the Western world) have remained so in ignorance about

the inner life is because we have limited ourselves to the intellect, with its fixed habits and poverty-stricken categories. Life is much larger than the intellect because the latter is merely an implement which life has formed to enable us to deal successfully with what is not living. Bergson does not depreciate the mind; on the contrary he holds it to be an admirable instrument for the practical purpose of dealing with the physical world, but not for speculation or for direct communion with the spiritual life that made it.

Much of Bergson's philosophy is a technical discussion of biology, psychology, and other branches of human knowledge. We shall not attempt to discuss his treatment of these subjects, nor the often brilliant way he uses them as proofs, or links in his chain of proof, to lead us towards the grander conceptions of the life of the spirit and the destiny of the soul. It is these last questions that reveal at once the heart and the culmination of the Bergsonian scheme, and so we shall deal with them direct. In his lectures and in special articles Bergson has replied to the storm of inquiry raised by scientists and religious thinkers alike; sometimes with a direct answer if he felt able, sometimes merely to indicate the direction in which he thinks an answer can be found. He does not often commit himself to an unqualified opinion. The study of the facts of the universe can give us "a direction only. But it is a great thing to have even a direction, and still more to have several directions, for at the precise point where these directions converge might be found the solution we are seeking. What we possess meanwhile are *lines of facts*, none of which goes far enough, none of which goes right up to the point which interests us and at which we want to place ourselves; but these lines may be more and more prolonged, and they, moreover, already sufficiently indicate to us, by the ideal prolongation that is open to us, the region in which the answer is to be found." That is, *facts* such as every modern scientist and philosopher has at his command lead Bergson to the spiritual world, the region "at which we want to place ourselves."

In the wonderful third chapter of *Creative Evolution,* Bergson gives us a dynamic interpretation of his intuition of the "Meaning of Life" and of the "Order of Nature." He traces the development or unfolding of consciousness through its various forms found in Nature, and comes finally to man. In man, and in man alone, does this life-force seem to have found freedom from automatism. "It has not found it with instinct, and it has not obtained it on the side of intelligence except by a sudden leap from the animal to man." We must study, then, how to penetrate to the consciousness back of both instinct and intelligence in order to obtain a glimpse of the life of universal consciousness—its creative, free, and spontaneous flow. Bergson finds that "the impetus of life . . . consists in *a need of creation.* It lies dormant when life is condemned to automatism; it awakens as soon as the possibility of a choice is restored." Hence man differs radically from the animals, and in his freedom to act proves his spiritual inheritance. We quote at

length, as nothing could be finer than the closing pages of this chapter. "With man, consciousness breaks the chain. In man, and in man alone, it sets itself free. The whole history of life until man has been that of effort of consciousness to raise matter, and of the more or less complete overwhelming of consciousness by the matter which has fallen back on it . . . But man not only maintains his machine, he succeeds in using it as he pleases. Doubtless he owes this to the superiority of his brain, . . . to his language, . . . to social life. But our brain, our society, and our language are only the external and various signs of one and the same internal superiority. They tell, each after its manner, the unique, exceptional success which life has won at a given moment of evolution. They express the difference of kind, and not only of degree, which separates man from the rest of the animal world." Man, then, must seize the advantages he possesses. The aim of philosophy ought to be to study Nature and to expand and unite intuitions. If it does this, man will become aware of the spiritual life. "And it shows at the same time the relation of the life of the spirit to that of the body. The great error of the doctrines on the spirit has been the idea that by isolating the spiritual life from all the rest, by suspending it in space as high as possible above the earth, they were placing it beyond attack, as if they were not thereby simply exposing it to be taken as an effect of mirage! Certainly they are right to listen to conscience when conscience affirms human freedom, but the intellect is there, which says that the cause determines its effect, that like conditions like, that all is repeated and all is given. They are right to believe in the absolute reality of the person and in his independence toward matter, but science is there, which shows the interdependence of conscious life and cerebral activity. They are right to attribute to man a privileged place in nature, to hold that the distance is infinite between the animal and man; but the history of life is there, which makes us witness the genesis of species by gradual transformation, and seems thus to reintegrate man in animality. When a strong instinct assures the probability of personal survival, they are right not to close their ears to its voice; but if there exist 'souls' capable of an independent life, whence do they come? When, how and why do they enter into this body which we see arise, quite naturally, from a mixed cell derived from the bodies of its two parents? All these questions will remain unanswered, a philosophy of intuition will be a negation of science, will be sooner or later swept away by science, if it does not resolve to see the life of the body just where it really is, on the road that leads to the life of the spirit."

Bergson then redescribes the initial impulse, which we have already considered and continues—"The matter that it bears along with it, and in the interstices of which it inserts itself, alone can divide it into distinct individualities. On flows the current, running through human generations, subdividing itself into individuals. This subdivision was vaguely indicated in it, but could not have been made clear without matter. Thus

souls are continually being created, which, nevertheless, in a certain sense pre-existed . . . Consciousness is distinct from the organism it animates, although it must undergo its vicissitudes . . . The destiny of consciousness is not bound up . . . with the destiny of cerebral matter. Finally, consciousness is essentially free; it is freedom itself; but it cannot pass through matter without settling on it, without adapting itself to it: this adaptation is what we call intellectuality; and the intellect, turning itself back toward active, that is to say free, consciousness, naturally makes it enter into the conceptual forms into which it is accustomed to see matter fit . . . Thus, to the eyes of a philosophy that attempts to reabsorb intellect in intuition, many difficulties vanish or become light. But such a doctrine does not only facilitate speculation; it gives us also more power to act and to live. For, with it, we feel ourselves no longer isolated in humanity, humanity no longer seems isolated in the nature that it dominates. As the smallest grain of dust is bound up with our entire solar system, drawn along with it in that undivided movement of descent which is materiality itself, so all organized being, from the humblest to the highest, from the first origins of life to the time in which we are, and in all places as in all times, do but evidence a single impulsion, the inverse of the movement of matter, and in itself indivisible. All the living hold together, and all yield to the same tremendous push. The animal takes its stand on the plant, man bestrides animality, and the whole of humanity, in space and in time, is one immense army galloping beside and before and behind each of us in an overwhelming charge able to beat down every resistance and clear the most formidable of obstacles, perhaps even death."

These long extracts may give the reader some glimpse of the freedom and swing of Bergson's thought. As M. Péguy says of him, he is geology, not geography! And his style is not that of the scholiast; he can rise above technical limitations and distinctions.

We see, then, that Bergson has indeed "rediscovered the soul," and has done it thoroughly and conclusively. Humanity is in a special sense the "ground of evolution,"—"on the road that leads to the life of the spirit." Bergson has given further weight to his declaration that we are right not to disregard our intuitions of immortality by entering the Society of Psychical Research, whatever we may think of his choice of this method for proving an after-existence. In addition to this he has given a still more illuminated statement, quoted from the Huxley Lecture, delivered at the University of Birmingham, May 29th, 1912. "May we not therefore suppose that the passage of consciousness through matter is destined to bring to precision,—in the form of distinct personalities,—tendencies or potentialities which at first were mingled, and also permit these personalities to test their force whilst at the same time increasing it by an effort of self-creation? On the other hand, when we see that consciousness, whilst being at once creation and choice, is also memory, that one of its essential functions is to accumulate and

preserve the past, that very probably (I lack time to attempt the demonstration of this point) the brain is an instrument of forgetfulness as much as one of remembrance, and that in pure consciousness nothing of the past is lost, the whole life of a conscious personality being an indivisible continuity, are we not led to suppose that the effort continues *beyond,* and that in this passage of consciousness through matter (the passage which at the tunnel's exit gives distinct personalities) consciousness is tempered like steel, and tests itself by clearly constituting personalities and preparing them, by the very effort which each of them is called upon to make, for a higher form of existence? If we admit that with man consciousness has finally left the tunnel, that everywhere else consciousness has remained imprisoned, that every other species corresponds to the arrest of something which in man succeeded in overcoming resistance and in expanding almost freely, thus displaying itself in true personalities capable of remembering all and willing all and controlling their past and their future, we shall have no repugnance in admitting that in man, though perhaps in man alone, consciousness pursues its path beyond this earthly life."

Of a definite plan or purpose for the universe, Bergson has written uncertainly. He himself does not see it, though he sees tendencies. That there can be no fixed, predetermined end he emphatically demonstrates. "True, we shall not witness the detailed accomplishment of a plan. Nature is more and better than a plan in course of realization. A plan is a term assigned to a labor: it closes the future whose form it indicates. Before the evolution of life, on the contrary, the portals of the future remain wide open. It is a creation that goes on forever in virtue of an initial movement. This movement constitutes the unity of the organized world —a prolific unity, of an infinite richness, superior to any that the intellect could dream of, for the intellect is only one of its aspects or products." Again, "Life, we have said, transcends finality as it transcends the other categories. . . . There has not, therefore, properly speaking, been any project or plan." Bergson is right in this, we think. Enough for us to see that spirit endeavors to "form distinct personalities," and that the tendency of life seems to be to create "complete men," men of masterly intellect and piercing spiritual intuition, who may even learn to surmount the barrier of death.

Of God, Bergson speaks with the same reticence and reserve. Once and for all he attacks and discards the definitions of Aristotle, of Spinoza, and of Anthropomorphic theology. But, looking out on the creative universe, he sees God as "unceasing life, action, freedom." And he adds, "creation, so conceived, is not a mystery; we experience it in ourselves when we act freely." Such actions, fulfilling our destiny, when we have raised ourselves above ourselves, Bergson points out, have received Nature's special stamp of approval—namely joy. "Philosophers who have speculated on the significance of life and the destiny of man have not sufficiently remarked that Nature has taken pains to give us notice

every time this destiny is accomplished; she has set up a sign which apprises us every time our activity is full of expansion; this sign is joy. I say joy; I do not say pleasure. Pleasure, in point of fact, is no more than an instrument contrived by Nature to obtain from the individual the preservation and the prolongation of life; it gives us no information concerning the direction in which life is flung forward. True joy, on the contrary, is an emphatic signal of the *triumph* of life." Joy manifests itself wherever we create, and to create is to use *"spiritual* force," to obey the "impulse toward a higher and higher efficiency, something which ever seeks to transcend itself, to extract from itself more than there is." Does this not remind us of the Master's joy, that abides in us, and which no man can take from us, the reward of those who love God and seek him?

Finally, Bergson sums up his own works on this subject in a letter to V. de Tonquédec. "The considerations put forward in my *Essay on the Immediate Data* (*Time and Free Will*) result in an illustration of the fact of liberty; those of *Matter and Memory* lead us, I hope, to put our finger on mental reality; those of *Creative Evolution* present creation as a fact: from all this we derive a clear idea of a free and creating God, producing matter and life at once, whose creative effort is continued, in a vital direction, by the evolution of species and the construction of human personalities." Such admissions from our philosopher are not the least significant part of his work, even where his revelations seem limited in certain directions. That these limitations themselves might at any moment be overcome we can always hope, for Bergson says that we can have a direct intuition of God, though we can by no means limit this experience within the formulation of a mental concept. "There is then within us, or rather behind us, a possible vision of God, as the Alexandrians said, a vision always virtual, never actually realized by the conscious intellect" (*Creative Evolution,* p. 322). Like certain Hindoo schools, he forbids mere speculation about God and the end of the universe.

* * * * * * * * * *

To sum up the work of a man of Bergson's power is a difficult undertaking. Great as has been the immediate fruit of his message, the real harvest lies in the future. Bergson has figured in this article somewhat as the resultant of all the historical, philosophical tradition behind him, which has been rapidly surveyed in the first two instalments. But this, though of course true and of value as determining just what Bergson had to contend against, is not the view of him which coming generations will, we think, hold. He is the pioneer into new fields, he has inaugurated a new era in philosophy; and as such will stand apart from the long line of his predecessors. Bergson has nothing of the ready-made about him. He is true genius, following his own light, his own intuitions. He has

come into contact, as the poets and mystics have always done, with reality, with the spiritual world; and he has given to humanity what he has known of this experience. Such as he have a power, transmit a power, of which they are too often unconscious; Bergson, we feel, is conscious both of what needs to be done and of what he is doing. On this head, his simplicity and humility are the root of his contagion; he assumes no more than any other man.

Of his philosophy, certain things, we feel, are sure to endure because they are transcriptions of living truths. Bergson has seen and written what Theosophical writers have set forth before he was known. He sees that to Spirit, Time has no real existence; it is only a necessary method and instrument of finite intellect. It is a *How* and not a *What,* a method of analysis, of intervalling or ruling off, which intellect employs to enable it to contemplate in successive parts the Spiritual Life. Space, too, has no real existence to Spirit. It is merely an order in which Spirit, when bound in the fetters of intellect and shut up in the prison of the body, is compelled to look out piecemeal on True Being—itself essentially one—in a broken, multitudinous and successive way. It is another *How,* not a *What,* a method of analysis, to enable our fractional natures to deal with the totality which they cannot contemplate, as yet, in unity. These two conceptions, opposed as they are to Kant and the other schools, will hold their place, and may easily enter with surprising rapidity into the fibre of our daily thinking.

Above all will Bergson be remembered for his method, and for the appeal that he makes to that higher consciousness in each one of us. Bergson finds in the depths of ourselves free-will, liberty; and he bids us rouse that will and live by the light of the intuition it brings. "You must take things by storm; you must thrust intelligence outside itself by an act of will" he tells us in *Creative Evolution.* It is the effort that best characterizes the growing tendency of our present humanity—the effort to become aware of the Life behind its physical or intellectual expressions. And since evolution is creation, we must learn to act, to create, and to become truly ourselves. Thus we are the architects of an infinite and transcendent future. But this future, in Bergson's view, is not to be regarded as a simple development of the present, a simple unfolding of germs already given;—else we limit creation itself. Consequently there is no authority for saying that there is forever only one order of life, only one plane of action, only one rhythm of duration, only one perspective of existence. And if there be, apparently, abrupt leaps from matter to life, from animal to man, have we not something analogous in the very essence of human life itself, in flesh and the spirit, in reason and love? For with man appear thought, reflection, clear consciousness, and moral problems. Then the path of evolution, its direction, its tendency, becomes Good; while Evil becomes that which travels in opposition to the Good. By the soundings of our intuition we can seize upon this tendency of the universe, this "Will that sends us

into the world"; can glimpse this Good, and so qualify for an advance step over present conditions.

We believe that Bergson marks the departure-point for future speculative philosophy and that he has opened a new channel for the minds of men to use in their search after Truth.

(Conclusion)

JOHN BLAKE, JR.

"The object of knowledge is action. Education is a preparation for life. A philosophy is to be judged by its power to inspire action of the right sort. Action of the right sort produces the higher knowledge."

V. V. V.

THE SACRED BOOKS OF ANCIENT CHINA

II

IN considering first the books of the Confucian canon, then the great text of Taoism, the *Tao-teh-king*, we are impressed immediately by the strong contrast between the respective methods which the two great teachers offer the disciple for his advancement toward the state of perfection. And this point of difference, we find, constitutes the very keynote of the two systems of thought. Whereas Confucius taught that the perfect state is to be gained by the punctilious observance of outward forms, and ceremonials, by conforming one's conduct to a thoroughly practical though lofty standard of virtue, Lao-tze turned away from or rather rose above the material plane and sought to draw near to reality by going behind external forms.

We are told that the latter philosopher lived about the year B. C. 604; that practically nothing is known of his early life; and that at an advanced age he withdrew from public service, seeking a lonely mountain pass where he might end his days in undisturbed quiet. Legend has it that he was recognized by the guard of the pass, who was himself a follower of the Tao and by the latter was induced, some say was locked up and forced, to write an account of his philosophy. Thus it is that we have the *Tao-teh-king*. Nothing further is known of its great author, and subsequent ages during which the popularity of his teachings flourished and declined, mark the alteration and even the complete loss of much of the original work.

Like all great mystics, and transcendental philosophers, his teachings were for the few, for those who could understand; and when imparted, as they were, to the many, misunderstanding, misinterpretation and ridicule followed as a natural consequence. Lao-tze, himself, says,

> "When a learned man hears Tao he follows it.
>
> When a man of average intelligence hears it, he holds to it for a while and presently loses it.
>
> When an ignorant man hears it he only laughs at it.
>
> If it were not held in derision by such, it could not rightly be called Tao."

Present-day critics speak of his writing as a series of paradoxes and subtleties of speech, quoting derisively such passages as, "a good keeper needs no bolts or bars, and none can open after him," "the

good binder needs no rope and none can loose after him," and offering as conclusive proof of the visionary character of his work, Lao-tze's own statement that the Tao could not possibly be imparted even by those who understood it. Not only current writers, however, but many of the great philosopher's disciples, as well, are guilty of manifest misinterpretations of his teachings, and in reading of the extremes to which this led, we appreciate to the full, the value of such an admonition as that quoted from St. Dionysius, in another number of the QUARTERLY, "See that none of the uninitiated hear these things. I mean those who cleave to created things and suppose not that anything exists after a supernatural manner, above nature, but imagine that by their own natural understanding they know Him who has made darkness His secret place."

Lao-tze taught of the Supreme and of the Way leading thereto; and the term which he applied to this dual concept was the Tao. In writing of it he recognized fully the fact that the Divine, the Infinite, is beyond definition, utterly remote from human comprehension, and the opening lines of his work show most clearly, perhaps, both the nature of this Tao and the impossibility of its being known to the "natural understanding":

> "The Path (meaning the Tao) that is the subject of discussion is not the Eternal Path.
>
> The quality which can be named is not its real attribute.
>
> That which was before heaven and earth, is called the Non-existent. Existence is the Mother of all things.
>
> Therefore does man seek after the First Mystery of Non-existence, while viewing in that which exists, the ultimates thereof.
>
> Non-existence and Existence are identical in everything but name.
>
> This identity of apparent opposites I designate the Profound, the Great Deep, the Open Door of Bewilderment."

Elsewhere, presenting it in its more positive aspect, he asserts that before heaven and earth were, there existed a primordial substance, serene, fathomless, self-existent, homogeneous, and without restraint. The qualifications of this substance, he tells us, are boundlessness, inscrutability, inaccessibility and omniprescence; and to this substance he applies the term Tao.

Yet in spite of the clearness with which Lao-tze states that the Tao is beyond mere verbal definition, that "the quality which can be named is not its real attribute," we find commentators endeavoring to reduce it to terms of the intellect. And among Lao-tze's own disciples, the idea of the Tao gradually crystallized; the Formless was given a definite form and the real character of his original teaching was lost sight of entirely. Later writers expounding and adding to his work, did not hesitate to attribute to Lao-tze much that was wholly their

own. Then too, by a series of misconceptions, his followers gradually came to occupy themselves with methods for the prolongation of life, the practice of magic, the study of alchemy and the search for an elixir of life. Toward the close of the pre-Christian era, Buddhism was introduced into China, and, apparently in an attempt to rival the new belief, Taoism became for the first time a religion, borrowing ceremonials, liturgies, the idea of a hell, etc., from the Buddhistic teachings. We are told by one of the ancient Chinese writers that Buddhism stole the best features of Taoism and Taoism the worst features of Buddhism. "It is as though one took a jewel from the other and the loser recouped the loss with a stone." Thus the history of Taoism is marked by a slow but none the less certain decline, until, in the present day it occupies a rather debased and anomalous position, being in many respects,—particularly in the matter of ceremonials,—scarcely distinguishable from the Buddhism of the country.

One of the first statements that one meets, and the one that is evidently regarded as most condemnatory, in accounts of Lao-tze's work, is the fact that he advocated the doctrine of inaction,—"do nothing and all things will be done." Commentators and evidently later disciples as well, have received this teaching with the intellect only, have taken it in its most literal sense and with consequences which are easily imagined. It may be well to examine the doctrine as set forth in the words of Lao-tze himself, taken from various parts of the *Tao-teh-king*.

> "By Non-action there is nothing which cannot be effected."
>
> "The sage acts through Non-action and hence he governs all."
>
> "To teach without words and to be useful without action,—few among men attain to this."
>
> "The gentlest thing in the world will over-ride the strongest. The Non-existent pervades everything though there be no inlet. So, by this I comprehend how effective inaction is."

That these words, as they stand, should be received by many as a doctrine of passivity and inertness of living is not altogether surprising. But it is necessary to remember that one of the points which Lao-tze emphasized most strongly was that the disciple should so live as to enable the Tao to act in and through him. And it was to this end that he urged the power of inaction, a fact which is shown in numerous passages, notably the following:

> "Acting without design; occupied without making a business of it; finding the great in what is small, and the many in the few; repaying injury with kindness; effecting difficult things while they are easy; and managing great things in their beginnings; (this is the way of Tao)."
>
> "The wise man . . . teaches without the use of words, he works without effort, he produces without possessing; he acts without

regard to the fruit of action; he brings his works to perfection without assuming credit; and, claiming nothing as his own, he cannot at any time be said to lose."

Surely these words are not written by an advocate of inactivity, of "do nothing and all things will be done"; do they not point, instead, to an activity, heightened because of the dissociation of self and the freedom from personal motives, thus reminding us of passages both in the *Gita* and *Light on the Path?* Perhaps the most noticeable resemblance, owing to the similarity in form as well as in spirit, is to that portion of the latter book where we are given the rule, "Kill out ambition," and then "Work as those work who are ambitious. Respect life as those who desire it. Be happy as those are who live for happiness."

Another point which commentators frequently raise against Taoism, and one of the main reasons given for its decline, is that its teachings are strongly adverse to education and learning. "Dispense with your learning and save yourself anxiety," we find in one portion of the *Tao-teh-king,* and numerous other passages imply that the effort to gain knowledge is so much time wasted. This principle, accepted literally at a later date, naturally brought derision on master and pupils alike, in a land where learning was highly regarded. Yet here again we feel that the teaching was for the initiated, for those who could read within the words, for in succeeding chapters we find it written,

"The wise man is ambitious of what others despise, and sets no value on things difficult to obtain.

He acquires no common learning, but reverts to that which the masses have passed by."

And again speaking of the Tao,

"Those who know it are not learned,
The learned do not know it."

From these two passages is it not apparent that he is condemning "the devotees of knowledge who forget their lives in the pursuit of it," and advocating that swift intuition spoken of in *Light on the Path* as "the only form of knowledge which enables a man to work rapidly or reach his true and high estate, within the limit of his conscious effort."

Indeed, in reading the *Tao-teh-king,* we note almost constantly the analogy between its teachings and the great truths contained in the *Gita* and *Light on the Path.* Throughout the book Lao-tze lays the utmost emphasis on being, rather than on doing; if we *are* what we teach, instruction by means of words will be unnecessary; if we undertake to act, we have only to bring ourselves into harmony with the Divine, and the Tao will use us as a channel, acting in and through us; if we are called upon to be rulers of men, and are possessors of the Tao, all things will of their

own accord fall into their proper places. There is nothing which cannot be brought about through this oneness with the Divine which Lao-tze calls the way of the Tao:

"Attain to the Great Idea, and all the world will flock to you;
It will flock to you and will not be hurt therein.
For it will rest in a wonderful peace."

The means by which this at-oneness is to be attained has again its parallel in the teachings of India. Take such a passage as,

"He is wise who knows others.
He who knows himself is enlightened.
He is strong who conquers others.
He who conquers himself is mighty."

To point the analogy here would be superfluous and this is equally true in the case of Lao-tze's teaching of lowliness and humility:

"He who having known the light remains in obscurity, will become a universal model.

He who knowing glory, at the same time continues in humility, will be a universal valley.

As a universal valley the Eternal Virtue will fill him."

Again it is made clear in line after line, that the way of the Tao means a turning from the objects of sense, entire detachment from the things of the world. To be a possessor of the Tao, one must realize that when he has accomplished his task and is about to receive the reward, then is the time to withhold; he must be able, though richly endowed with this world's goods, to dwell among them wholly without attachment. "Light will blind a man's eyes," says the sage, "sound will make him deaf; taste will ruin his palate; the chase will make a man wild; and precious things will tempt him.

Therefore does the wise man provide for the soul and not for the senses.

He ignores the one and takes the other in both hands."

Two other passages which strongly bear out the parallelism between the Chinese and the Indian teaching, it will perhaps be well to give in the words of the *Tao-teh-king:*

"I observe myself, and I come to know others;
I observe my family, and others grow familiar;
I observe the kingdom, and others are known to me;
I study this my world, and other worlds are within my knowledge."

And also:

"A man may know the world without leaving his own home.
Through his own window he can see the supreme Tao.
The further afield he goes, the less likely he is to find it."

Compare with these the passage in *Light on the Path,* "Regard most earnestly your own heart. For through your own heart comes the one light which can illumine life and make it clear to your eyes. Study the hearts of men, that you may know what is that world in which you live and of which you will to be a part."

In the Christian teachings likewise, as may well be expected, there is much that is similar to the philosophy of Lao-tze. In accounts of his work we find noted, for instance, the fact that he anticipated the Christ in his teaching of the return both of good for good and of good for evil. This rule met with scant approbation among the followers of Confucius, who, if they did not practice the doctrine of "an eye for an eye," were at least taught that evil should invariably be met with stern justice. One of the most striking resemblances between the teaching of Lao-tze and that of the Master is the following passage, possessing much of the beauty of the sermon on the mount:

> "Whosoever humbleth himself, shall be preserved to the end.
> Whosoever bendeth himself shall be straightened.
> Whosoever emptieth himself shall be filled.
> Whosoever subjecteth himself shall be exalted.
> Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased."

Loftiness of thought and exaltation of spirit are characteristic of the *Tao-teh-king,* so much so, in fact, that we soon come to regard all that is not beautiful in Taoism as not Lao-tze. All that means unwisdom and unloveliness in the conduct of those who have styled themselves his followers, all the degradation with which his philosophy has met in the form of modern Taoism, merely seems the natural effect of the passage of time and the imperfect medium of men's minds, on a thought originally perfect in its beauty. The result is much as though we were studying the reverse side of an exquisite tapestry and instinctively we agree with the great philosopher that, "To regulate one's life by the ancient knowledge of Tao is to have found the Path."

JULIA CHICKERING.

DANTE'S BEATRICE

THE vexed question of the historical or allegorical character of Beatrice, as described in the trilogy of Dante, would require a volume for its proper treatment, and there is only space here for a brief and very inadequate summary of the principal arguments in the case. That she was a real person, the daughter of Folco Portinari, and the wife of Simone de' Bardi, that she was born about a year after Dante, was a married woman at the time of her father's death, and that she departed this life in June, 1290, are statements vouched for by Boccaccio, and accepted as historical facts by such early writers as Benvenuto da Imola, Filippo Villani, Manetti, Landino, and Bruni. But these all follow the story of Boccaccio, and of him Scartazzini (one of the most accomplished of Dante scholars) tells us that "we should have wilfully to shut our eyes, not to see that the loquacious Certaldese is a thousand miles removed from the conscientious accuracy of the serious historian, and that if he did not invent the facts which he relates, to give weight to his declamations, as certain too rigorous critics have not hesitated to accuse him of doing, he certainly took no manner of care to verify the historical truth and exactness of the facts related by him" (*Vita di Dante,* p. 6). And Scartazzini might have added that the greater part of Boccaccio's story is a mere amplification of Dante's *Vita Nuova,* with the important difference that Dante nowhere identifies his Beatrice with any family of Florence, nor does he identify the city where she lived with Florence, but speaks simply of "that city in which God had placed my lady." The dates given by Dante in the *Vita Nuova* are all mystical combinations of the number 9, and it seems hardly probable that so many coincidences could have occurred in a real life. And although we could readily believe in the love of a boy of nine for a playmate a little younger than himself (as in the case of Byron, for example), it is hard to believe that as the children lived so very near each other, and Dante says that he often "went in search of this youngest of the angels," that it could have been *nine years* after their first meeting before she ever spoke to him, and then only to salute him in the street as she passed by. And it is still more incredible that the love of a boy of eighteen, whose only outward recognition in the space of nine years was a passing salutation, should have needed the "screen" of a pretended love for two other ladies. And if within the space of three years, at the farthest, from their second meeting, Beatrice married Simone de' Bardi, why have we no allusion to a fact so tragic in its significance to even the most ideal of lovers? It is true that Dante mentions the father and friends of Beatrice, but he also speaks of the *relatives* and friends of Philosophy, who were dear to him for her sake.

Not many days after the death of Beatrice's father, Dante himself falls ill, and on the *ninth* day of this illness the thought occurs to him that Beatrice herself must die someday; whereupon he has a vision of her as dead, and the details of this vision correspond in many respects with the description of her first appearance in *Purg.*, c. 30. Following this dream comes the curious passage already quoted, wherein he compares *Joan* who came before Beatrice to *John,* who came before the true Light, after which he makes a long digression to prove the necessary use by poets of an allegory in the form of a love-story.

His own narrative abruptly breaks off at the news of the death of Beatrice, at the *first hour* of the *ninth* day of the *ninth* month (according to Syrian reckoning), of that year of the century (the thirteenth) in which the perfect number (ten) was *nine* times completed. And as one reason why *nine* plays so conspicuous a part in her history is that all the nine heavens were in most perfect harmony at her birth, but "the more subtle and infallibly true reason is, that she was a miracle whose *sole root* was the miraculous Trinity." Does this sound like the genealogy of a mortal woman?

Here the story of the *Convito* comes in, to corroborate and help out that of the *Vita Nuova.* Having defined the method of his exposition as first literal and then allegorical, and having explained that the former is a *beautiful fiction,* while the latter is *the hidden truth,* Dante proceeds (Book ii. ch. 2) to tell us that two years after the death of Beatrice he first saw the *donna gentile,* the "lady at the window" (of § 36, *Vito Nuova),* who so comforted him by her pitying glances, that he thought of her as a person who pleased him only too well. This lady, Dante Rossetti conjectures, may be meant for Gemma Donati (whom Dante married a year or two, perhaps, after the death of Beatrice, and whose house stood between those of Alighieri and the Portinari), because he believes "in the existence always of actual events, even where the allegorical superstructure has been raised by Dante himself."

Such was for a long time my own belief, but, after careful consideration of Dante's definition of the *literal,* I cannot find that it necessarily implies the *historical.* It is simply a narrative, however fabulous, under which he conceals his true thought (see Book ii. ch. 1). And the argument for the *necessity* of the existence of the actual Beatrice falls to the ground when we admit that "the literal" is often what the poet himself calls it—"a beautiful *fiction.*" It is quite possible, nay, probable, that Dante may have fallen in love, at the age of nine, with a little neighbour who became to him "the idol of his youth, the darling of his manhood, and the most blessed memory of his age"; but I cannot see that we have any right to identity that ideal with Beatrice *Portinari* from any evidence furnished by Dante himself. Such identification rests solely upon the authority of that exceedingly untrustworthy romancer, Boccaccio.

The dates and the events of the *Vita Nuova,* I repeat, are too mystical to belong to real life, and we have no more right to identify "the lady of

my *mind*" with Beatrice Portinari, than we have to identify "the lady at the window" (who, Dante tells us, is Philosophy) with Gemma Donati, or the lady "screen" with Monna Vanna. Dante strikes his key-note in the very first section of the *Vita Nuova,* when he speaks of "the first time that appeared before my eyes the glorious lady *of my mind,*" implying a pre-existing conception. In fact, I cannot but feel that even if those were "actual events" upon which Dante raised "his allegorical superstructure," that that superstructure had become to him the all-important thing.

In the *Vita Nuova* and in the *Convito* the story is the same. Two years after the death of Beatrice, Dante found consolation in the charms of Philosophy, and for the next two years and a half devoted himself to scholastic learning. The works of Cicero and Boëthius were his constant study, and the *Consolations of Philosophy* of the latter seems to have suggested much of Dante's allegory. It is very certain that Dante owed far less to the various *Visions* and *Voyages* in Heaven and Hell that had preceded Him, than to the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, the *Aeneid* of Virgil, Cicero's *Dream of Scipio,* and his various essays, the *Consolations* of Boëthius, and the suggestive words of the Apocalypse, and the Book of the Wisdom of Solomon.

But, in spite of the charms of scholastic learning and the active life, the love of the first Beatrice was still latent in the soul of the poet; and as he proceeds with the *Convito,* he shows us how beyond science and all morality is the Divine Philosophy or Eternal Wisdom, which is full of all peace, and whose dwelling-place is that Quiet Heaven where the soul is at rest in God. So at the end of the *Vita Nuova,* after describing the same struggle of conflicting thoughts that he dwells upon in the *Convito,* he has a vision (about the *ninth* hour again) of the glorified Beatrice, clothed in that sanguine raiment in which she first appeared to his eyes, and she seemed to him as young as when he first saw her. And, remembering the past, he grieves to think that he has ever loved another, and all his thoughts return to their most noble Beatrice. And he has a vision of her receiving homage beyond "that sphere of widest range," that is, in the Quiet Heaven of Divine Wisdom and Peace. And after that he has another vision (of the *Commedia*), in which he sees things that make him resolve to say no more of this blessed one till he can more worthily treat of her.

If we interpret Dante's story after his own fashion, that fourfold manner in which he says all books "*may* be read and *ought* to be explained," it seems to me that we have, according to the *literal* sense, the story of a heart that consoles itself for the loss of its first love with the pity of another, and then repents its inconstancy, and returns to its original object of devotion. If we take it in the *allegorical* sense, we have the rivalry between philosophy of the schools and theology. If we interpret it according to its *moral* significance, we have the opposition of the active life and the contemplative life, the two beatitudes that Dante

tells us are possible to man; and if we look for the *mystical* meaning, we have a soul that, having recognized its true blessedness in the Divine Wisdom, loses itself for a time in the things of this world, shortly to repent, and to turn back to "that blessed Beatrice, that gazeth continually upon the face of God," for she "is privy to the mysteries of the knowledge of God, and a lover of His works" (Wisd. viii. 4).

The Book of the Wisdom of Solomon (said by some authorities to have been written by Philo) is constantly quoted by Dante, and if we put together some of its verses, we shall see how closely he followed its suggestions in many passages of the *Commedia* as well as the *Convito*. We read, for instance, in the description of Wisdom—

"I loved her, and sought her out from my youth; I desired to make her my spouse, and I was a lover of her beauty.

"Therefore I purposed to take her to live with me, knowing that she would be a counsellor of good things, and a comfort in cares and grief.

"Moreover, by means of her I shall obtain immortality, and leave behind me an everlasting memorial to them that come after me" (ch. viii. 2, 9, 13).

"What hath pride profited us? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us?

"All these things are passed away like a shadow, . . . and as when a bird hath flown in the air" (ch. v. 8, 9, 11).

"Wherefore I called upon God and the Spirit of Wisdom came to me.

"I preferred her before scepters and thrones, and esteemed riches as nothing in comparison of her.

"For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty.

"For she is the brightness of the everlasting Light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness.

"And in all ages, entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God and prophets.

"For she is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of the stars: being compared with the light, she is found before it" (ch. vii. 7, 8, 25-27, 29).

"And Wisdom knoweth thy works, and was present when Thou madest the world" (ch. ix. 9).

"Before the fair flowers were seen, or ever the motive powers were established, before the innumerable multitude of angels were gathered together (2 Esdras vi. 3).

"Wherefore," says Dante (*Conv.* iii. 14), "it is written of this eternal Love which is Wisdom, *He created me from the beginning before the world, and I shall never fail* (Ecclus. xxiv. 9). And in the Proverbs of Solomon (viii. 23) she, Wisdom, says, *I was set up from everlasting.* And in the beginning of the Gospel of John her eternity is openly declared."

From these and many other passages quoted or assimilated by Dante,

we see the deep hold that the Gnostic ideas had taken upon his mind, and the close resemblance that his "Wisdom" (identified here and in many other places with the Logos and the Second Person of the Trinity) bears to that of spiritual intuition, or secret knowledge of Divine things, common to mystics of all ages. She is identified with the *Active Intelligence* of the scholiasts, and with the *Gnosis* of the Hermetic philosophers. We read in *Hermes Trismegistus* (said by Bunsen to have been finished at the latest 670 B. C., and by others assigned to a far earlier date) that "God did not create all men with intelligence" (that is, spiritual insight), "because He wished to hold it before men's souls as a prize to strive for. He filled a great bowl with it, and sent it by a messenger, ordering him to cry to the hearts of men, 'Baptize ye, ye who have the power, in the bowl; ye who believe that you will return to Him who has sent it, ye who know wherefore you are born!' And those who answered the call, and were baptized in this intelligence, these possess the *Gnosis,* and have become the initiated of the spirit, the perfect men. Those who did not understand the call, possess reason but not intelligence, and know not wherefore and by whom they were formed. Composed alone of passions and desires, they do not admire that which is worthy to be contemplated, but give themselves up to the pleasures and appetites of the body, and believe that this is the end of man. But those who have received the gift of God, these are immortal, and no longer mortal. Disdaining all things, corporeal and incorporeal, they aspire towards the One and the Only. This is the wisdom of the spirit, to contemplate Divine things and to know God. This is the blessing of the Divine bowl."

So Dante says, "If it happen that by the purity of the receiving soul the intellectual virtue be absolutely separate and free from any corporeal shadow, then the Divine goodness multiplies in that soul, as in a thing worthy to receive it; and further, it multiplies in the soul endowed with this intelligence according to her capacity of reception. . . . And in such a soul is her own virtue, and the intellectual, and the Divine. . . . And some are of opinion that if all these powers should co-operate in the production of a soul according to their most favorable disposition, the Diety would descend upon that soul in such fulness that it would be almost another God incarnate" (*Conv.* iv. 21).

If we open the *Consolations of Philosophy,* by Boëthius, we find many striking resemblances to the allegory of Dante. Boëthius, wretched and in prison, is lamenting his exile and his misfortunes, when a lady of majestic presence suddenly appears at his bedside. She has glowing eyes, and a stature that is at one moment that of ordinary men, and the next rises to the highest heavens. Her garment, woven by her own hands, of the finest indissoluble threads has inscribed upon its lowest edge an *alpha,* upon its highest an *omega,* and between the two is embroidered a ladder of many degrees. But her robe is torn, and violent hands have rent away the fragments. In one hand she carries a sceptre, in the other some books. She expels the muses of poetry from the philosopher's

cell, saying that, under the guise of medicines, they have given him sweet poisons. "You have taken from me no common man," she says to them, "but this my faithful one, whom I believed to be in Greece, rapt in the study of Plato and Aristotle. Depart from him, ye sirens, whose sweetness hath brought him nigh to death." And these having left him, she seats herself by his bedside.

"Dost thou know me?" she says to him. "It is in sooth I, who nourished thee, and who armed thee with such weapons that, hadst thou not thrown them down, would have defended thee from every assault." Whereupon Boëthius wept bitterly, and she dried his eyes with the hem of her robe.

This lady is Philosophy, who never abandons her faithful ones. She requires from her disciple a full confession, and hearing how he laments the lost favours of Fortune, his exile and his imprisonment, sets herself to discredit this rival, to show him how worthless are her favours and herself. She tells him that man's true fatherland is the contemplation of immortal and divine things, and that they alone should be called exiles who are shut out from this perfection, seeing that the ultimate end of man is the supreme beatitude of the contemplative life, and to that end he should dedicate himself entirely. Therefore she who has loved him from his earliest years, now that she has told him wherein consists his true beatitude, will point out to him—first indicating the things he should avoid—the path which will lead him back to it, and will replume the wings of his mind so that he may be enabled to soar to "la somma Beatrice." There, restored to health and safety, and untroubled, made one of the army of heaven, he will contemplate the law by which the King of kings rules the universe, and will see how, for the individual as for the race, the highest beatitude is resolved into the Unity.

When Beatrice first appears to Dante in Purgatory, she says to him, "Look at me well; I am in sooth Beatrice! How didst thou deign (being lost in the pride of philosophy) to come unto this mount where man is happy? Not only by the influence of the stars at his birth," she continues, addressing her attendant virtues, "did this man receive great intellectual power, but also by the special gift of Divine grace did he become such in his new life (*sua vita nuova*) that everything good was possible to him. I revealed myself to him in his youth, and for some time led him with me in the right way, but when I stood upon the threshold of my second age and changed life, he left me, and gave himself to another. As I ascended from flesh to spirit, and beauty and virtue increased in me, I became less dear to him, and he turned to pursue those false images of good that never fulfil their promises. Nor was he affected by the inspiration of the visions that I sent him, but fell so low that I was obliged to show him the realm of the lost. The law of justice would be broken should he pass Lethe without tears and repentance." And then, addressing herself directly to the poet, she demands his confession that this charge is true, and asks him what

impediments he found while following those desires inspired by her (which led him to love that good wherein aspiration ceases) that caused him to lose hope, or what advantages to any other good that he should turn to it? And the poet, weeping, says that the things of this world, with their false images of pleasure, led him astray as soon as her countenance was hidden from him. Then Beatrice tells him that her "buried flesh" should have led him in the opposite direction; for neither art nor nature ever gave him so much pleasure as her fair members now dispersed in earth.

In the *Convito* (iii. 14, 15) Dante tells us that the soul of Divine Philosophy is love, and the *beauty of her body* is morality, "because as the beauty of the body results from the proper ordering of its members, so the beauty of wisdom, which is the body of philosophy, results from that ordering of the mortal virtues which makes us take a sensible delight in them." Barlow (*Hist. Contributions to the Study of Dante*), in commenting upon this passage of the *Purgatorio,* says, "The *Donna* of the *Vita Nuova,* of the *Convito,* and of the *Divina Commedia* is one and the same, only differently treated. In the first we have the Aristotelian *form* of Beatrice treated of, that is, Amore, in the second we have the *beauty* of Beatrice treated of, that is, *Morality;* in the third we have the *Substance* of Beatrice treated of, *il soggetto materiale,* or *Sapienza,* in which the real nature of Dante's *Donna* is made manifest."

The two passages of the *Purgatorio* already quoted (*Purg.,* 30, 127-130, and 31, 47-51), where Beatrice speaks of her "second age" and of her "buried flesh," have always been the stronghold of those who believe in the historical Beatrice; but if we are to accept these lines in their literal sense, they carry us entirely too far, and convey a meaning which is surely other than Dante's. In the *Vita Nuova* the whole story of his intercourse with Beatrice is limited to his *seeing* her once at the age of nine (§ 2), to her speaking to him nine years afterwards, as she passed him in the street (§ 3), and to his seeing her once across a church (§ 5), after which, hearing of his love for "the lady who served him as a screen" on that occasion, she refuses to salute him (§ 10), and even joins with her companions in making a jest of him when he meets her once more at a wedding feast (§ 14); while Dante himself assures us, "to prevent every vicious thought," that the end of his desires was the salutation of his lady, "which consisted of two acts of her mouth—her smile and her speech" (§ 19). Is it not grossly inconsistent with this poetic ideal, for that Beatrice who went through life so clothed upon with maidenly modesty, to tell her lover when she first meets him in the spirit world—a lover the end of whose desires was her smile of greeting—that her *fair body* had given him more pleasure than anything in art or nature, and that the memory of that "buried flesh" should have kept him insensible to all other attractions, for when "the highest of all pleasures" was taken from him by her death, what mortal thing was there to awaken desire? (*Purg.,* 31, 48-54). She had told him just before that

the desire for her led him to love that Good beyond which there is nothing to aspire to; but could the love of the body, however fair, inspire that love of God that Dante describes over and over again as "our highest beatitude"?

It seems to me impossible to take the Beatrice of the *Vita Nuova* for an historical reality and the Beatrice of the *Commedia* for an allegory (as many have done), because the two are so closely connected; in fact, as Giuliani says (though he is, nevertheless, a realist), comparing § 29, *Vita Nuova,* and *Par.* 32. 7, where Beatrice is placed under the standard of the Virgin, "whoever noticed all these minute relations, and, indeed, the perfect accordance of the *Vita Nuova,* the *Commedia,* and all the other works of Dante, must be forced, while he admires, to recognize ever the same mind in the architect of such numerous and varied works." And not only the same mind, but the same intention.

Perez identifies Beatrice with the Active Intelligence (which he identifies with Wisdom, or the Divine Light), and his argument may be briefly summed up thus. Dante is said by Beatrice (*Purg.,* 30. 109, *et seq.*) to be endowed with all possible intellectual power; not only by the influence of the stars at his birth, but by the special gift of Divine grace, which is that seed of felicity that is the beginning of all good in man (*Conv.* iv. 21). The fruit which should be produced from this seed is the blessedness which follows the use of the soul in contemplation (ibid. 22). The angel at the sepulchre says to those who have wandered from the true way—that is, to all who have sought for happiness in *the active life*—that it is not there, but that it goeth before them into *speculation,* or the contemplative life. Now, if (as Dante has said elsewhere) "the highest Good, beyond which there is nothing to aspire to," is the use of our intellect in speculation; if the false pleasures of present things make up the beatitude that the schools of philosophy are seeking in this world—where they will never find it; if Beatrice asserts that she guided him in his youth to this highest Good; and if, as we have seen, the intellect cannot act unless the *active Intelligence* enlighten it; what else can Beatrice be, but that Active Intelligence (or Divine Wisdom), the enlightener of the *possible intellect* (or human understanding), which, united to the latter, becomes the *Beatrice beata?* (the blessed or glorified Beatrice).

Dante's *beatitude had preceded him into speculation,* and he finds her on the summit of "the Mount Delectable, which is the source and cause of every joy" (*Inf.* I. 77), whence, by the power of his lady's eyes, he is lifted to travel through the heavens (*Par.* 17. 113). So Richard of St. Victor says, "Man must ascend this mountain if he would comprehend those things which are above human senses. Its ascent leads to the knowledge of one's self; that which happens on the summit leads to the knowledge of God. He who ascends the mountain, who knows himself as he is, will know what he should be. The mind that never

rises to the knowledge of itself, can it ever soar upon the wings of contemplation to that which is above itself? So long as it spends itself in manifold desires, so long as by many ways of thought it wanders here and there, it cannot ascend to contemplation."

"And thus it appears," says Dante (*Conv.,* iv. 22), "that our beatitude, that is, this felicity of which we are speaking, we may first find imperfectly in the active life, that is, in the exercise of the moral virtues, and then almost perfectly in the contemplative life, that is, in the exercise of the intellectual virtues; which two operations are unimpeded and most direct ways to lead us to the supreme beatitude that cannot be obtained here below."

The story of Dante's inner life (*la vita nuova,* or *regenerate* life), as told in the great trilogy of his works, appears to be this—that from his early boyhood he had felt a strong love for the contemplative life (or study of Divine Wisdom); that amid the distractions of the active life, the pursuits of the world, the cares of the state and the family, the duties of the soldier, the studies of the artist and the scientist, this heavenly "giver of blessings," this Divine beatitude, passed away from him. Then came the consolations of scholastic philosophy, with "its false images of good," in whose attractions his whole soul was for a time absorbed, until at last the vision of the higher life, as he had seen it when a boy, came back to him, and he returned to the love of the Divine Wisdom, who revealed to him first her *eyes,* "those demonstrations wherein one sees the truth with the greatest certitude," and then her "second beauty," her *smile,* "through which the inner light of Wisdom shines as without any veil"; for in these two we feel that highest pleasure of beatitude which is the greatest joy of Paradise (*Conv.,* iii. 15).

KATHARINE HILLARD.

"Were we to take as much pains to be what we ought, as we do to disguise what we are, we might appear like ourselves, without being at the trouble of any disguise at all."

LA ROCHFOUCAULD.

INSPIRATION IN ART AND MORALS*

SOME of us are loath to admit the inconsistency between an artist's work and an artist's life, which Plato recognized, when, with ironical praise, he called the poet a "light and winged and holy thing," and then, leading the "holy" creature beyond the gates of the sacred city, gave him freedom to distil his honied pollutions outside the holy precincts. The inconsistency persists, notwithstanding our unwillingness to face its consequences. Of all but an exceedingly small number of poets the life and the works are at variance. We repeat Whitman's exquisite lines

> The night in silence under many a star,
> The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose voice I know,
> And the soul turning to thee O vast and well-veil'd death,

and we vainly deplore his six ill-gotten children. We sing with Swinburne

> If love were what the rose is,
> And I were like the leaf,

and then laugh at the suffragetic frenzy of his life. The beauty of holiness seems almost unveiled as Milton chants the celestial choirs,

> Up he rode,
> Followed with acclamation, and the sound
> Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tuned
> Angelic harmonies.

But the harshnesses of Milton's personal life refuse to melt in the sounding symphony of his words. We grow "breathless with adoration" as Buonarotti prays to Vittoria Colonna, *e s'i'c' amo con fede Trascendo a Dio, e fo dolce la morte,* till Buonarotti's brawling, and fisti-cuffing, and nose-breaking disturb our devotion.

It is not only the life and the works that are at variance. Even in the work of many artists, there yawn abysses that are almost immeasurable between sublimity and inanity. Such disparity of achievement is not explainable by immaturity, etc. For it does not cease when the poet is

* Part of a discussion at a meeting of the NEW YORK BRANCH of the T. S.

at his zenith. In a single poem—often in a very short poem—one finds verses that wheel on eagle wings and others that lie flat on the ground, heavy and stupid. Wordsworth is not unique; he is typical. How superb the lines in the *Prelude!*

> Like angels stopped upon the wing by sound
> Of harmony from Heaven's remotest spheres.

Yet, in the same work, the climax of another section is the appalling line

> And Negro ladies, in white muslin gowns.

Poe wears real jewels on one hand,

> Nicean barks of yore
> That gently, o'er a perfumed sea
> The weary, wayward wanderer bore,

and on the other flashy imitations:

> At the end of our path a liquescent
> And nebulous lustre was born.

Noyes delights one with "cornices and coronals," yet, in a flower fantasy, is so little the master as to write "the soft petallic door." Any poet, whether careful or careless in his workmanship, classic or romantic, shows in his written work the immense difference between good and bad taste, between inspiration and dead imitation; it matters not whom we read—Francis Thompson, Matthew Arnold, Shelley, Chaucer or Tennyson.

What causes such a wide oscillation in matters of taste and excellence? The poets certainly have not been unmindful that in their art they were aiming at high ideals. O'Shaughnessy states the opinion (and his vacillating verses are thoroughly characteristic) of the whole clan; they are the leaders of humanity, they think, however obscure and resultless their efforts may seem.

> We are the music makers
> And we are the dreamers of dreams,
> World losers and world forsakers,
> On whom the cold moon gleams,
> Yet we are the movers and shakers
> Of the world forever, it seems.

Other poets make the same declaration in other words

> I am thy storm-thrush of the days that darken,
> Thy petrel in the foam that bears thy bark.

Even the cool-brained, myriad-minded Shakespeare thinks of the poet as seer and prophet—thus almost as religious leader. The poet stands in the van and sees ahead into invisible realms.

> The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
> Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,
> And, as imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
> Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name.

The poet's unconsciousness of sublimity and of bathos which appear side by side in his writing, is explained, I think, by the creative function that manifests through him. The word itself means *a maker* or *creator* ποιήτης (poietes from ποιέω (poieo) to make or do). Let us assume that all creation issues in hierarchical procession from the Unmanifested Logos. To understand something of the process of creation by nature and by art, let us take as example, flowers. Flowers, I have heard said, are the thoughts of angels. A real flower then is an entity on the spiritual plane evolved from the consciousness of some superior being. The spiritual force of the true flower in its radiation downward reaches the plane of matter, and comes to manifestation as a blossom familiar to us, rose, lily or larkspur, lovely shadows of ravishing blooms. So far for nature. The creation by art may be said to begin at this point. A man is enamoured of the color and perfume of a rose. He hangs over it, he gives himself pain to protect it, his thoughts center about it, and his dreams picture it. May not such self-sacrificing devotion rise like incense of worship to the rose-angel and attract his attention to the ardent worshipper? "We become what we love." The man would find delight in merging his own identity with the flower he loves. He begins to draw it on wood or marble. His worship makes, as it were a mould, to be filled by the original creative impulse. The magnetic lines of force from the true flower in the spiritual world come to a focus in the rose-lover's mould. A new rose is born—this time with stone or wooden petals. None of the color or perfume of the earthly rose is depicted. There is no hideous waxen imitation. There is something subtler. Flower-lovers, who caress the garden blossom recognize its marble sister. They feel the *"spirit of the rose"* subtily pervading and animating the granite petals. They love ardently this new rose created by art. Such is artistic creation. No matter what be the artist's material, iron, pigment, stone or words, it is galvanized into life by spiritual force. The outer vesture of the rose will differ—the animating spirit is the same. All art that is not thus spiritually created is waxen.

What does it take to make a rose,
Mother-mine?
The God that died to make it knows
It takes the world's eternal wars,
It takes the moon and all the stars,
It takes the might of heaven and hell
And the everlasting Love as well,
Little child.

Such a view of artistic creation would explain the variable excellence of an artist's work. His flaming love and devotion draws magnetic force to a focus. The original creative impulse acts through him in his self-forgetfulness. But he cannot maintain that white intensity of love and devotion. His selfish, lower nature asserts itself, becomes dominant. Some memory of the inspired moment lingers. And it is his job to versify or paint or carve. So he goes to his task. And in cold egotism he writes some pompous or ludicrous line that seems to him as good as any other.

The deeper antithesis between the poet's art and morals is not however explained by this theory. Milton said the man who wished to write a great poem "ought himself to be a true poem—that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honorablest things." Artists are not such patterns. If one follow their example, one lands in gross and vulgar immoralities. Their moral vagaries bewilder many honest minds, that, having no religion higher than art, would logically accept artists as religious guides. Yet native honesty and decency restrain them from artists' swinishness. The artist's moral failure cannot be extenuated. It can only be faced. Recognized for what it is, and condoned with no sentimentality, one can only depose them from their usurped place of leadership. Blind leaders! it is the saints who are the vanguard of humanity, the pioneers who blaze the path of return to the happy home from which the exile, man, has strayed.

In the province of literature itself, there is an analogy to that usurpation of the poets upon the realm of the saints. That analogy is the rise to prominence of the critical essay during the XIXth Century. Carlyle said that the critic stands between the poet and the uninspired man. The critic is a sort of middleman who interprets to the average reader the poet's language which would otherwise be an unknown tongue. One is familiar with the sympathetic interpretations thus made, in France by Sainte Beuve, in America by Lowell, and in England by Matthew Arnold and others. The aim of those critics was, in every case, to lead readers, by an interesting essay, to the poetry itself. But many people found the interpretive essay pleasant and easy reading, while the poetry required an effort. So they came to rest satisfied with the essay, and that which should have led up to poetry unintentionally became something of a hindrance.

Just as the critic stands as interpreter between the poet and the average man, so the poet stands as middleman between the saint and the world. The poet interprets to the world the high ecstasy and joy of the saints. But an effort is required to share the saint's experience. On the other hand, to read about that experience in poetry is comparatively easy. Thus poetry has become as it were a block in the way instead of being a stepping-stone toward the beauty of holiness.

The true relation of artist and saint may perhaps be reached if we study the attitude of each in a given circumstance. Take the exquisite lullaby of Noyes—a slumber song of the Blessed Virgin.

> Sleep, little baby, I love thee.
> Sleep, little king, I am bending above thee.
> How should I know what to sing
> Here in my arms as I swing thee to sleep?
> Kings may have wonderful jewels to bring,
> Mother has only a kiss for her king!
> Why should my singing so make me to weep?
> Only I know that I love thee, I love thee,
> Love thee, my little one, sleep.

What movement of the will or emotions will be roused by that verse? In an aspirant for laureateship, the emotions will be touched. There will be a reaction of impulse. The effect is superficial. Let me make my meaning clearer. Some years ago, a friend came back to America after several years of hard work on music. She was finely cultivated. The first music she heard after her return was some of the old plantation songs. They were unfamiliar to her. I remember quite vividly how she was touched by the ravishing melody, "Steal away home to Jesus." Tears were in her eyes. For the moment she was ready to start at once southward to devote her life to work among the negroes. The melody haunted her and sang itself in her memory. But she never acted upon her impulse. She had quite other ambitions. And she never gave a moment's consideration to the deep significance of the words. She remained on the shifting surface of emotion. She never got down to the reality of the will. The simple figure in those words "Steal away home," if heeded, would have led out of the region of shadows face to face with a living Musician ("His voice was like the sound of many waters"). Is it clear now how the poetic temperament acts? To enjoy the song by Noyes no belief in the Christian story is necessary. A skeptical mind can admit a supposititious Virgin who might thus sing. The mildness of mother and child, the playfulness, the swinging joy, will give lively pleasure, and will arouse a desire to produce other scenes and songs as picturesque and lovely.

How would the song affect a religious person who has an unconscious desire to follow the way of the saints? In such a heart the song

recalling Christian history might bring to memory those words of Pusey's: "He left us, but to be closer to us; He left us in Bodily Presence, but to be present still more nearly in Spirit; not without us any longer, as Teacher, Guide, Comforter, but within us; withdrawn from our bodily sight, to fill our souls; no longer to be touched or handled by our hands, that His Spirit might be made manifest to our spirit, that we might touch Him with the hands of our heart, feed on Him with the cravings of our spirit, see Him with the eyes of our mind, be enlarged to receive Him, and being expanded, be filled with Him, and be 'one with Him and He with us.'"

Meditation upon those words might bring back Pascal's saying that it is the good fortune of those who love Christ to experience in themselves all the events of His life. Roused to action by that cumulation of statements, the religious aspirant would use his will to put himself in the way of experiencing what Noyes has recorded. With a desire to imitate the saints, he might reflect upon the words of St. Paul to the Galatians: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." He would come to believe that Christ could be born in his heart, and that from Him, the Master Musician, he might learn a true song to sing Him. In other words, a saint would experience at first hand, the reality which a poet knows at second hand. The saint knows. The poet hears about what the saint has seen and felt, and writes it down.

In the sense of the Greek word, it is the saint therefore who is the true *maker* or *poet*. The saint with resolute will puts himself to practise until he comes to share the consciousness of spiritual powers, is one with them, and, through that oneness, shares their creative faculty. The saint's joy is, we may say, radio-active. It reaches the poet and sets him vibrating. The poet, as we know him apart from the saint, is in no sense a creator. He is a recorder, a sensitive medium. He reflects with more or less of faithfulness the joy and beauty and truth and goodness which the saint creates. He reflects some of the light when his sensitive plate is unclouded with personal defilement. When the lower personality is the only medium, there is no reflection of truth and beauty, but the foul or pompous or ridiculous things in which all poetic writing abounds.

THEODORE ASHTON.

GOD AND IMMORTALITY*

"Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?"—Job xi, 7.

SITTING opposite me at one of the lunch tables at the Club were two men who were apparently discussing the question of Immortality. My attention was attracted when one of them, with an air of finality, said:

"Immortality is at the utmost a mere hope. There is no way of proving it, or even of showing its probability." When reference was made to certain men eminent in scientific circles who testified to having received convincing proof of the survival of the conscious human personality after that which we call death, he contemptuously brushed their testimony aside as unworthy of credence. His attitude was typical of the attitude of the average intelligent and cultured man,—an attitude that is in its way quite as mysterious as is the mystery of Immortality.

In matters of recognized science the utterances of Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Crookes, Alfred Russell Wallace, Camille Flammarion, and Caesare Lombroso are received with respect and acknowledged as authoritative. Men who accept without hesitation their pronouncements on such matters reject as unworthy of credence their testimony on matters relating to man's continued conscious existence after the death of the body. I will confess that I am not convinced that the phenomena of so-called Spiritualism is sufficient in and of itself to demonstrate to my satisfaction the survival of the conscious personality. I am satisfied of the genuineness of much of the phenomena, but await further evidence as to its meaning. However, as I listened to the conversation referred to, it occurred to me to try the question out in my own mind along other lines and for my own satisfaction.

Is it true that we can do no more than guess at and hope for Immortality, or is it possible, by any process of legitimate reasoning, to demonstrate the probability, if not the certainty, of such Immortality,—the Immortality of intelligent and conscious humanity? Do we still have conscious existence after we have passed through the change called death, and if so can that fact be fairly deduced by legitimate processes of reasoning from other and generally acknowledged facts?

First, let us consider a matter of definition: What do we mean by Immortality in this connection? What idea does the word "Immortality" convey to us? Does it mean that the real individual is a conscious personality that first came into existence with our birth or generation, but which continues conscious existence after the body has been

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destroyed? Or, does it mean that the real individual is an entity that has always existed and will always exist, and which has simply occupied the body as a temporary vehicle for manifestation? If the former, the inquiry ends where it begins. Immortality cannot be predicated of that which has a beginning. If anything is immortal, it has been always and will be always. Lest this may be considered dogmatic, let it be understood that it is in this case and for my present purpose a mere matter of definition. It is a statement of what I mean by Immortality. In my inquiry concerning Immortality I shall start with the premise that nothing is to be considered as immortal that has had a beginning or that can be conceived of as having an ending. That which is immortal can know of time only as an episode in its eternal sweep.

What is really meant, therefore, from this point of view, by an affirmation of Immortality in man is, that there exists an intelligent and conscious entity in connection with our physical bodies, but separable therefrom,—a Something that is also apart from physical life, in which our consciousness resides, which not only does not die when our bodies die, but which cannot die;—a Something that has been always and will be always; that Something to which has been given the name of Soul. It seems to me that in essaying a solution of this problem, there should be coupled with it the further inquiry concerning the existence of a Supreme and Conscious Intelligence,—that Infinite and Supreme Something to which we give the name God. Indeed that inquiry should take precedence. Can we know that God is? I confess that I approach the subject with diffidence. It savors much of presumption to essay a solution of problems which so many great minds have found insoluble.

I am not vain enough to think I shall be able to add anything to the wisdom of the ages. My only hope is that I may be able to point out a way by which those of us who do not lay claim to great wisdom may reach an understanding of some of that wisdom which seems obscure and hard to understand. Solomon says:

> "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun.
>
> "Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us."——
>
> —*Ecclesiastes, Chapter 1, verses 9 and 10.*

Students of Plato and of the Hindoo and Egyptian sages will probably say that my effort is but a weak attempt to re-state theories that are not only not new, but that they were exploited thousands of years ago. This is doubtless true. Those theories, however, have failed of general acceptance, and are known only to students of Philosophy. The majority of persons of average intelligence of today know but little of them, and truth to say, care even less. May it not be that the reason they have failed of general acceptance is because that in the manner of

their statement they were above the heads of the people of average intelligence? May it not be that the very grandeur of the conception involved in these theories, coupled with the manner in which they have been given out, has placed them beyond the grasp of those of us whose intelligence is not above the average and who lack in intuition? While great and philosophic minds may be able to conceive intuitively a great truth, those of us who lack intuition need the ladders of logic and induction to enable us to scale the heights to which intuition carries them at a bound. It seems to me that the discoveries of modern science have supplied enough rounds in the ladder to bring us to a point where knowledge can begin to take the place of doubt and uncertainty. It seems to me that in the present state of human knowledge we know enough of nature and of nature's laws to enable us not only to affirm our belief in the existence of God, but to demonstrate such existence by legitimate processes of reasoning, and also to demonstrate the probability, if not the certainty, of our own Immortality. It is probable that the majority who affirm their belief in the existence of God do so as a mere matter of faith. Would not all such be better satisfied if they could demonstrate by legitimate reasoning that their faith is well founded?

The one great fact of which we are bound to take cognizance is the existence of the universe. There is an occult saying that man is an epitome of the universe. Of course this conveys no definite meaning to the scientific mind except that it is an assertion apparently resting on no basis of ascertained fact. That statement may be true or it may not be, but as man is within and a part of the universe, it is manifest that there is nothing in him that is not in the universe. If we can discover and know broadly and generally all of the things that are in the universe, our knowledge will of course embrace all that is in man. I do not mean to suggest that it is possible for us, with our limited faculties and our limited means of observation, to know all of the complex forms which substance or matter may assume, or the combinations in which it may appear; or of the forms in which energy or force may manifest itself. But may we not be able to take cognizance of that which embraces all of these various forms of matter and manifestations of energy, and as a matter of broad generalization, of all that makes up the universe?

The two things in the universe of which we are first bound to take cognizance, are matter or substance and force or energy.

Matter or Substance

We know matter or substance in the aggregate. By this I mean everything we know as matter. In whatsoever form or guise it may appear, whether as solid, as liquid, as gaseous, or in forms so subtle and refined, or diffused, that our senses cannot cognize it, or any instruments we may devise detect its presence, it is still only substance or matter. In so far as the visible, tangible universe is concerned, it is made up of matter in some form. It is common knowledge that science

has reached the point of suggesting, if not actually declaring that instead of there being some eighty-odd primary or elementary substances or elements, there is but one Protean, elemental and primary form of substance, and that all of the so-called elements are merely differing forms in which that substance manifests itself. If substance or matter partakes of Immortality, it must be merely *as* substance or matter, whatever that may be, but not as to any particular form in which we find it. In its primary or elementary form it may possibly be eternal and immortal, but in that form it is and may forever be beyond our ken. At all events we at present only know it as something that is ever subject to change and ever changing. We do know, however, through the revelations of the spectroscope, that matter as we know it on the earth is uniform with matter throughout the universe. Not only so, but among the recent theories advanced by science is that which finds in the universal ether which pervades infinite space that elemental and primary form of matter. A still more recent theory is that what we call matter is only an appearance created by force, so that if this is true even the so-called universal ether is in fact at the same time universal and elemental force or energy, and all the various forms of matter so-called are only some of its varying manifestations. Do not these discoveries concerning the nature and composition of matter or substance furnish us some rounds in the ladder? Whether this is true or not, force and matter are more closely united than were the Siamese Twins.

Energy or Force

We never find substance or matter separate from some form of energy or force. There is no such thing as dead matter, in the sense that matter ever exists apart from some form or mode of force. Science has demonstrated beyond controversy that every atom of matter, however minute, is at all times vibrant with energy. Matter and force are inseparable. I use the terms "substance" and "matter" interchangeably, as meaning the same thing. So also I use the words "energy" and "force" as being in this connection synonymous. Like matter, force manifests itself in many forms. A study of the correlation of forces, however, suggests that as all of the various forms of matter are but varying combinations formed from the one elementary and primary form of matter, so force or energy in all of its varying manifestations is one, the apparent difference being due to causes which we may in time discover as we are gradually discovering the relations between light and heat, and electricity and sound. Whether this is true or not, we do know that light, heat and electricity are each manifestations of force or energy. So also are the things we call gravitation, attraction, repulsion, cohesion, the varying phenomena of chemical reactions, and even life. As I shall endeavor to show hereafter, life itself is only the organizing and sustaining force in nature. It is only one of the many forms in which that Protean thing we know as energy manifests itself. Have we

not here still other rounds in that ladder? Is force or energy immortal? Again I would say that as force or energy it is doubtless eternal and immortal, but not so as to any one phase of its manifestations. But of that hereafter.

How Force and Matter Act

While we find force and matter everywhere, apparently inseparable, and acting together, force acting on matter so-called, and matter apparently reacting on force, we always find them acting in accordance with law: Law that is without limit in its scope; law that governs the movements of the universe and the movements of the atom; law that controls the development of worlds, and with equal care and precision controls the unfolding of a flower; law that is so certain, so uniform, and so unvarying in its action, that the astronomer can tell with certainty the position occupied by a given heavenly body a million years ago, and can with equal certainty point out the precise point in space that will be occupied by that same body a million of years in the future. The chemist knows that the chemical reactions between substances to-day do not vary a hair's breadth from the chemical reactions between the same substances in the very beginning of time, and the physicist knows that he can rely with certainty on the law of cause and effect, and that without exception a given cause will always produce the same effect. Science recognizes the universal reign of law and the perfection with which it does its work. Here again are other rounds that carry us still higher. Whence comes that law? Does it not imply intelligence? Could its source be elsewhere than in mind of infinite scope?

What is the legitimate inference to be drawn from all this? Would anyone venture to suggest that the intelligence and power that obviously lie back of manifested nature were mere products of matter and force? If so, matter and force themselves make the laws which they obey, and which they are apparently unable to disobey. Can it be possible that the appearance of a conscious intelligence in the orderly processes that attend every movement, whether of the universe or of the atom, is due merely to the reactions of force and matter on each other? We only know the visible material universe through a multitude of phenomena in which we find that something we call "matter" assuming various forms as it is acted upon by some mode or manifestation of that other something to which we give many names, but which by whatever name we call it we recognize as a form of force or energy. No form of force of which we have any knowledge is self-originating. Every form of force of which we have any knowledge began acting only under a communicated impulse. Whence comes that impulse? We know that whatever form force or energy assumes, it acts under control of and in strict obedience to immutable laws, to which we give the name of "The Laws of Nature." Do we ever find matter and force acting otherwise than in strict obedience to laws that never vary? Do we ever find matter and force throwing

off this yoke of the law's control, and entering on new and untrodden paths? While new species have appeared from time to time in the life of the world, while other species have disappeared, and while variations and changes in existing species are from time to time developed, is it not true that in the evolution of these new species and of these variations nature has ever followed the orderly processes of that which seems to be the great law of life and development? Have not matter and force, considering life as one of the manifestations of force, ever been the obedient servants of law, instead of being its originators? Is it not too plain to admit of argument that Infinite Mind lies back of all manifested nature and controls all? The special pertinence of this will be apparent when we come to consider man.

GOD

"The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." *Psalm 14. 1.*
"As for God, his way is perfect." *Psalm 18. 30.*
"The law of the Lord is perfect." *Psalm 19. 7.*
"The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." *Psalm 99. 1.*

So far as our first inquiry is concerned, the ladder is complete. The inference is irresistible that there is a third element in nature,—the source of that law, a Something which is entirely outside of both force and matter. It tells us in language that cannot be misunderstood, of an Intelligence that is independent of both and that is Infinite and All-embracing, coupled with a Power that is All-controlling. All of the so-called laws of nature seem to emanate from "It." Nothing in the vast realm of nature seems to be above or beyond the control of these laws. They control alike the movements of suns and worlds that swing through space, and of the atom, ion, or electron so small that the most powerful microscope fails to disclose its form. As the mind of man can but faintly grasp the idea of space that has no bounds, or of eternity that has neither beginning nor end, so the conception of an Intelligence and a Power without possible limitations defies the possibility of exact definition. In its vastness it seems not only the unknown but the unknowable. Any name we may give to it is at the utmost a mere symbol. Words all have their limitations in our minds, and even the word "God," to the minds of millions of people, seems to carry no idea but that of a Being of many limitations, and yet we have no other word that seems at all adequate. The unvarying and unerring accuracy of the laws which seem to emanate from It, bespeak Infinite Intelligence and Infinite Wisdom, while the manner in which they act tell us of Infinite Power. It embraces all that we can possibly conceive of under the names of Mind, Intelligence, Consciousness, Will, and Power. Power not as force, but as that which controls and directs force. May not that which we call force and energy be only one of the manifestations of that Infinite Power? May not that which we call matter or substance be a

mere appearance created by that Power manifesting as force or energy? Do not recent speculations concerning the "ions" and the "electrons" suggest this? If so, is not the apparent trinity of nature, viz.—substance or matter, force or energy, and the unknown and unknowable source of law and power, reduced to one? The trinity becomes unity. But again does not that unity become a trinity when we recognize in it Infinite Knowledge, Infinite Wisdom, and Infinite Power? Knowledge which embraces all things; Wisdom that holds all knowledge in orderly and harmonious classification and arrangement, and has within the grasp of its perfect comprehension all that enters into the shaping of worlds and systems of worlds; and Power that with Infinite Wisdom directs and controls. Again, Three in One. The unknown and the unknowable. Here at last do we not find Immortality, Something that knows neither beginning nor end, neither past nor future. Something for which time does not exist. A Something for which there is only an eternal now. *I am that I am.* Serene and changeless through the eternities. It is the mighty soul of the universe. In this Immortal Something we find mind,—superlative mind, combined with superlative wisdom;—mind that does not have to grasp and strive and search for truth, but mind that knows; mind that makes no guesses, but that spans and grasps the infinitudes; mind that holds within its never-loosening grasp all the knowledge, not only of the ages but of the eternities that are unbounded by either space or time; mind that comprehends each and every phase and detail of the laws that rule the movements of the universe, from suns and systems of suns and worlds, to the laws that rule the genesis and the movements of the tiniest animalcule or the tiniest atom, ion, or electron. Something there is, though, more than mind and more than wisdom. Mind can conceive, mind can plan, mind can formulate laws, and wisdom can co-ordinate them, but to enforce those laws, to make those plans effective, power is necessary, and so, coupled with that Infinite, that Superlative Mind, we find an Infinite and Superlative Power. Not mere force, not simply energy, but a Something that controls and directs force, a Something that is Infinite and Resistless. And as with matter and force, so with that Infinite Mind, that Infinite Wisdom, and that Infinite Power. They, too, are inseparable. Wherever we find the unvarying and unchanging laws of nature acting (and they are always and everywhere acting), they are acting with a Power that cannot be stayed or resisted. Do not the names "matter," "force," and "mind," with mind's inseparable and accompanying "power" (which would perhaps be better named "Spirit"), embrace all that is to be found in the universe? Matter that takes on many forms, but which, in whatsoever guise it appears, is after all only matter; force, which manifests in many ways, but which may be always recognized as force; and Mind, with its accompanying executive officer Power or Spirit. This embraces all. Search as we may we can find nothing more.

These are not mere abstractions. The universe, with its component

parts,—substance, energy, intelligence and power, are concrete and cognizable things. So also is that Trinity in Unity in which is combined Infinite Mind that knows all things, Infinite Wisdom that plans all things, and Infinite Power that compels all things. The One only and true God. I shall not hazard any definition of the attributes of this Infinite and Ineffable One. I will, however, call attention to the fact that in all of the world's great religions, there is recognition of the existence of a Divine and Overruling Power, or of Divine and Ruling Powers. Whether these religions have been Ethnic or racial, or whether they have been Catholic and world embracing; whether they have been Monotheistic or Polytheistic, their followers have clothed their conception of Diety, or of their Deities, with certain attributes, and it is worthy of note that in every instance, while as a rule the attributes with which a people have invested Deity have marked the limitations in the development of that race or of that people, their Deities have ever been clothed with immortality and power. Ingersoll was accused of irreverence when he inverted Pope, and declared that—

"An honest God is the noblest work of man";

but the irreverence was only for those conceptions of God which pictured him as cruel, jealous, vindictive, revengeful, savage and bloodthirsty; who would and did command and commend wholesale butchery and wholesale robbery. Neither shall I attempt even to imagine form or habitation for this Omniscient, Omnipresent, and Omnipotent One. I will, however, venture this suggestion: Is it not conceivable that this Infinite One who is the seat of all knowledge, the personification of all wisdom, and the source of all power, is indeed that loving "Heavenly Father" of whom Jesus taught? If so, his consciousness embraces every atom of illimitable space, and not a tear can fall, not a sigh be breathed, nor a thought take shape in the mind of man, that is not instantly known to him, and no appeal for aid can possibly be unheard. While it is inconceivable that a Being of such Infinite Wisdom will violate or abrogate any law to grant the prayer of anyone, is it not conceivable that the prayer of one worthy and deserving that can be answered without the violation of any law may be heard and answered, not in violation of but by and through those laws? However, this is aside from the main inquiry. It is plain that in a general way we can and do know all that is embraced in the universe. We also know that the universe is governed by an Infinite, Conscious Intelligence, acting with Infinite Power, and knowing these things we know that God is.

Man

"What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" *Psalm 8. 4.*

When we turn to a study of man, do we not find the same things in nature that we find in the universe at large? There could of course be nothing more, but neither is there anything less, except in degree. We find in physical man substance and energy, or matter and force,—force acting as life, the builder and maintainer. We find them acting together as everywhere, in accordance with law, and we also find conscious intelligence and power; power as manifested in that we call Will. The matter and the force in man do not differ from matter and force as we find them elsewhere in nature. Nor does life as we find it in man differ from life as we find it in other animals, or in that which builds a tree or paints a flower. As everywhere, it is the building and sustaining or maintaining force in nature. Two atoms of matter encounter each other, and we have a germ. In some way life enters and we have a living germ in which is a potential man. Two other atoms of matter encounter each other, and we have another germ, and again life enters and we have another living germ in which is a potential oak. How life enters is in either case aside from our present inquiry. It is enough for our purpose at this time, to know that it does enter, and that when it enters the germ is complete. But of what it has become a living germ depends upon the character of the impulse that has been given to the life force by a power of which life is a mere servant.

It is, of course, obvious that civilized man of today has been developed from man of a lower type intellectually, morally and physically. Indeed he is still developing, and we may today study many phases in that process. Man, as we know him today, even among the most brutalized and savage races, has taken many steps in an ascending scale. This, however, is not only true of man, but of other forms of organic nature. The records of the ages, written by nature herself, on tablets of enduring stone, tell us of a constant unfolding and development. From germ to cell, from protoplasm and protozoan to man, the line of march has been unbroken. Nature has ever been reaching upward, and as species and races have run their course and disappeared, others higher in the scale have taken their places. Through all the millenniums there appears no break. The so-called "missing link" between the monkey and man does not break the chain. There is no valid reason to suppose that there ever was such a link. It is inconceivable to suppose that the Power that produced the original germ which life wrought into a living creature, exhausted its power with the production of a single germ. There were no doubt myriads of original germs, each of which was the beginning of a line of descent, or rather of ascent. The inference that all living organisms have developed from a single primordial cell rests upon the assumption that the Power which lies back of organic nature had spent its force with the production of that single cell. All organic forms as we know them begin their existence with a germ, and the initial effort of the life force which has been emplanted in that germ results in the production,—first, of a single cell,

but as cell after cell is added we discover that in each instance when life enters a particular germ it comes charged with the duty of performing a particular bit of work and of building a structure along predetermined lines. An intelligent Something has furnished the plans of that structure, and the work of life consists in obediently following those plans. As each living thing has its beginning in a germ, and in an initial cell, so doubtless each particular form of organic nature had as its progenitor its own original germ. It has been remarked many times by students of Evolution, that it did not furnish an explanation of the beginnings of organic life, but only traced the lines of growth and development after life had begun its work. Evolution accounts for variation in species, and for improvement in forms, but it does not nor can it explain the origin of entirely new forms. It can trace the development of the horse from the Eohippus, or from still earlier forms, but it cannot tell of the origin of the germ in which was embodied the original Eohippus. Why search for a "missing link" between the oyster and the monkey, or between the monkey and man? It strikes me that the entire philosophy which is based upon the assumption that in all the æons nature was able to produce but one solitary original germ of grotesquely absurd. We know that such a germ was at one time produced. Grant the power of nature to do this, and we grant the power of nature to produce still other germs, and from those other germs to produce forms that differed as widely in their beginning as they differ today. It is far more reasonable to believe that the original germ from which the monkey has developed was only capable of producing the monkey, and that the original germ from which man came could only result in the production of man. As physical man today begins with a germ, and from the first cell up can only grow into a human form, so the germ which marked the genesis of man could grow into nothing but a human form.

Physical man is, as is obvious, a mere temporary mechanism, beginning with a germ and built up by life, and certain, sooner or later, to be broken up and thrown into nature's scrapheap. The human body is, however, a wonderfully and delicately adjusted piece of mechanism, the masterpiece of that master builder,—life. The plan followed by that builder, including the construction of the instrument, the correlation of its several parts, their interdependence and their adaptation to the work each part is to do as a part of the whole, shows that the architect, the maker of that plan, had intelligence and design of the highest conceivable order. Does not the manner of the construction of this mechanism, and its adaptability for use as an instrument by an indwelling intelligence, indicate a design on the part of the Supreme Intelligence that it should be occupied and used by an intelligent entity? Is it not plain that it is thus occupied and used? As we have seen, life is limited in the scope of its operation, and can only act along predetermined lines. It builds, but in building it can only follow the plans of the Architect. Having built, its further functions relate only to the maintenance of the structure,

but as I have said, the instrument it has fashioned is plainly adapted to use by an intelligent operator. What of that operator?

In the developed man, as in the universe at large, we find something more than matter and force or life. As in the universe, and apparently differing only in degree, we find also conscious intelligence, coupled with power to control and direct force. Man thinks, reasons, formulates plans, and has the power to act in the execution of his plans. He has the power to develop and set in operation various forms or kinds of force, and to make them do his bidding. He is of course limited in his action by the laws which govern the universe, and can accomplish nothing in violation of those laws. But this is also true of the Supreme and Overruling Intelligence and Power from which the law emanates. If it is true that the universe is governed by law, and that that law is enacted by a Supreme and Infinite Intelligence, such a law emanating from such a source is not only perfect but it also necessarily involves a self-imposed limitation upon the intelligent source of the law. Otherwise it would not be perfect. It can only be perfect if it provides for every possible contingency, so that no change can ever become necessary.

But can any difference be shown, except in degree, between the Intelligence and Power which rules the universe, and intelligence and power as displayed by man? Man can himself set in operation the laws that govern nature, and can generate, direct and control force. He can mould matter into such forms as suit his convenience, his pleasure, or his caprice. Having done that which according to the laws of nature would lead to a certain result, he may do something else which will change the result. Having set in operation a given form or mode of force for the accomplishment of a certain purpose, he may not only suspend or terminate its operation but he may consciously and intelligently substitute for it a different form of force for the accomplishment of that same design, or of a still different design. He even has power within the limits imposed by nature's laws, to control, direct, or even to terminate the action of life itself. Does not all this go far to vindicate the occult saying that man is an epitome of the universe?

It may be asked that if it be conceded that mind in man is identical, except in degree, with that Supreme and Intelligent Mind that lies back of manifested nature, how does this tend to show that man is immortal as a separate and an individual entity? Does it show anything more than that mind in man is merely a manifestation of the universal Mind? As science has shown us that all of the various forms of matter are reducible to one primary or elementary form, and that all of the varying modes in which force acts as merely differences in the mode in which the one elementary force makes itself known, is it not reasonable to conclude that mind in man is merely a mode in which universal mind manifests itself? What reason is there for supposing that mind in the individual man is an entity separate and apart from universal mind? To this I answer, my effort is to show, if not the certainty, at least the

probability that the individual man is a separate and immortal entity, and that it seems to me that nature plainly shows us how this may be. There is ample analogy in nature to make plain to us how mind in man may be at the same time a part of that universal mind, and also be in each of us a separate and an individual entity. Such analogy may be found in certain crystals. Take a large crystal of a certain kind, and carefully note its facets and its angles. Subdivide this crystal along its lines of cleavage, and continue such subdivision until we have reached the smallest subdivision into which our instruments will enable us to separate it, and we will find that each of such subdivisions is a perfect crystal, with the same number of facets and the same angles as we found in the large crystals. The large crystal was in itself a single, a complete, and a perfect entity, but so also are each of the innumerable smaller crystals into which it has been subdivided. If we could re-assemble the small crystals and place them as they were, we would again have one large and perfect crystal, but we would know that within it were all of the smaller crystals and that each one of them was a separate and perfect individual. In Genesis we read:

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him."—*Genesis, Chap 1, v. 27.*

The Infinite God is One, perfect and complete. If man is made in God's image, he is also one,—a separate and a complete individual. May he not also be at the same time a part of that Infinite One?

Let it be understood that my reference to the crystal is merely by way of illustration and to demonstrate the possibility of the separate and individual existence of man as an intelligent, conscious, and immortal, but separate entity, coincidently with the oneness of conscious intelligence throughout the universe. We find that man possesses in miniature that immortal something which we found in the universe, and which we recognize as the chief attribute of God. In man we find mind, we find potential wisdom, and we find nascent power, and in finding them have we not found the immortal soul of man? We have found the tenant for the house that life has built. We have found the real man. We have found immortal man. Man not only made in the image of God, but formed from the very essence of God.

ROBERT W. MCBRIDE.

WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

TO those who join the T. S. early in life, as has been my good fortune, it may not be so easy to formulate in the mind a reason for doing so, for our experience being but in the bud as far as this life is concerned we have not had the opportunity to weigh the pros and cons of existence which maturer years, in the natural course of things, would furnish. So as I look back and trace the path which led me to the T. S. I find myself saying first of all that it was because I was impelled, was ready for such a step and all that it implied, that I joined,—which to another may not be any reason at all. Upon consideration, however, it will no doubt be seen that such readiness must have in it a combination of mental and spiritual growth in some degree; a heart to feel the necessity of a universal brotherhood among men, a mind to comprehend something of the basis upon which it can be established.

While in my earlier years circumstances, at times, associated me with people of a theologically narrow and dogmatic type, their views did not appeal to me and consequently such contact had not the effect of getting me into a rut and keeping me back. After this came a period in which I was left to do my own thinking uninfluenced, and from which freedom I emerged none the worse. There was certainly an appeal to my sense of honor to live a good, straightforward life, but beyond that nothing to confine me in any way. Arriving, then, at a period when I more definitely approached the problems of life, I was enabled to do so with a practically free and unbiased mind.

I consider I received no little help from a study of some of the poets. I may only have perceived their beauty or significance in a very small degree, but yet I feel that the religious aspect, the high ideals which they put forward, contributed largely in preparing the way for further enlightenment. Of these poets Tennyson was certainly the most helpful, and as I call to mind some of the verses that particularly struck me, it is wonderful to see how much they contain. While, of course, all these cannot be given, perhaps the following may be of interest:

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
Yet not for power (power of herself
Would come uncalled for) but to live by law,
Acting the law we live by without fear;

And because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.

. . . . .

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul, according well
May make one music as before
But vaster.

. . . . .

Thou seemest human divine,
The highest, holiest manhood thou:
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine."

Though the orthodox Christian idea of Deity did not appeal to me, the impersonal idea was but very vague and indefinite. Beginning to attend, at this time, a Unitarian Church, where a larger degree of religious freedom seemed to prevail, my mind mainly dwelt upon works as being the most important feature—the idea that by the life we lived should we be judged. Continuing in this fluidic state I made the acquaintance, at this church, of one who was a student of Theosophy and who lent me some books on the subject. These I read with deep interest for I felt the scheme of life which they presented was the very thing I had been wanting. What impressed me mainly, as far as I remember, were the teachings of Reincarnation and Karma. I always had a feeling of how right and just it must be for a man to reap that which he has sown. And when I read how this law of cause and effect operated, it opened up quite a new pathway. The progress and salvation which it offered was the most encouraging thing I had ever heard of, and so I had not the slightest difficulty or hesitation in accepting it. Along with this teaching of Reincarnation was of course the fuller and more complete explanation of the constitution of man which gave considerable light to St. Paul's triune man of body, soul and spirit,—where before there was none. Coming to a knowledge of Theosophy brought in its train some knowledge of the T. S. and its work, so at this point I think what other reasons I had for joining may fittingly be given.

The principal aim and object of the Society: "to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour," was what strongly appealed to me. I felt it my duty to ally myself with such a force for good. At times when I have heard other nations and races unkindly or unfairly spoken of, I have wondered at such people, for most of them would admit that God created all men, that it was only their fortune being born in a certain nation, and if such was more intelligent, more evolved, surely it was more responsible.

The principal aim and object of the Society so strongly appealed to me because of the light which Theosophy shed upon the nature of man. The basis of Brotherhood was removed to a deeper source altogether and seen from this vantage ground the "call to arms" was made much more imperative and clear; the cry was not "Am I my brother's keeper?" but "I *am* my brother's keeper." Referring to the constitution of the Society and the procedure of its meetings it is perhaps needless to say how much I felt in sympathy with them. I recognized the necessity, the value, of a body or organization to which could not be attached any view or belief. In this way it provided an open door for all who had the real welfare of humanity at heart. Just as no member can commit the Society to any belief, another wise provision is the basis upon which discussion may take place. A member or friend may freely express his belief on any given subject but he may not force such upon others. What of course also greatly appealed to me was the opportunity the meetings afforded for each one to take part. Self-expression seemed to me an important factor and where one could show an appreciation of another's ideal or give even a different view in a kindly spirit, what more could one desire as a means of harmony and enlightenment.

These, then, were my reasons for joining and which I still regard now as having the same value. Certainly I have more fully awakened to the *trend*, the *keynote* of the Society, as time has gone on, and on its importance I consider too much stress cannot be laid. It is a thing which is attached and at the same time unattached to the Society: it is attached in that it exists amongst the members and that its influence pervades the meetings—as of course other places; it is unattached in that it is not to be found in the constitution or in any official document. From this it will be evident that it is a question of perception, of our becoming cognizant of it. But this perception is also a question of growth. According to the life we have lived has our pathway been illumined. So by effort our Ideal has widened and deepened. This, then, is an Ideal—the Ideal of Discipleship—a thing which is not by any means fascinating or attractive to everyone, but which is infinitely worth all the striving it requires to make it the Real. It seems to me that this hall-mark of spiritual force will render the Society a greater power for good than can be conceived, it may not bring a large increase of membership, but it certainly will draw those who are preparing for such a life, and those whose sympathies tend in that direction. Though the latter may not be prepared for the more direct, positive efforts towards Discipleship, yet they can appreciate the atmosphere such an Ideal can create.

EDWARD LEWIS.

It is many years since I joined this dearly loved Society, and if one has known it long, the thought of it becomes so much a part of

one's life that it is very difficult to disassociate oneself enough to think or explain why one joined.

It is much like telling why one was born. In that case, one came into this outer world to learn through the conditions of external life. Many of us believe, I think, that the purpose of Creation is for the evolution of Consciousness in, and through, all the planes of matter, consciousness gradually growing finer and more spiritual and matter more rarified.

I was fortunate in being born into a family which believed in the reality and primal importance of the spiritual part of man's nature, and the necessity of occupying our minds and hearts with the highest and best of which we know, in order that it may increase and multiply within and around us.

Born in such surroundings, associations and reading naturally gravitated in due time to the centre of its vital expression, as embodied in the Theosophical Society. In the lives of the leaders there was inspiration to an understanding pursuit of the spiritual life, and in the teachings there was an explanation of the laws of the spiritual life, which accentuated the continuity of life and made all life just and fair.

They taught that we cannot throw off our individual responsibility, but that the spiritual law brings to us only what we justly deserve, and deals impartially with all. If we wish different results, we can beget causes which will bring them, and we can complain of no one but ourselves. Not finding fault with God or man saves a great amount of time and makes life infinitely easier. In my experience, the teachings of this dear Society are invaluable, in enabling one to live the Christian life in its more interior sense, through the explanation of the laws which Christ taught, but which so few comprehend.

It is vastly easier to do what one understands, and to follow a continuous thread, continuous as found in all the ages, and nations, and religions.

"Life behind its accidents" becomes the real thing to us, and harmony gradually evolves in our thoughts and lives, where before was chaos.

Is not this enough to hold one to the Theosophical Society? Could one do otherwise than join, or remain, in an organization that gives a scientific, as well as spiritual, explanation of the laws of life? Could one do otherwise than wish to unite his life with those who believe, teach, and constantly endeavor to live such vital truths? Having received so much, gratitude alone would make one wish to do his utmost to help the work of the Society. And in addition, one reveres and loves the Masters, who founded, and the devoted souls, who, for so many years, have carried on this work for humanity. Great is the honor if one is permitted to serve in any way.

JANE SLOCUM.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE following words were inscribed on a banner carried on Labor Day, up Fifth Avenue in New York, by some union of Jewish workmen:

"We have nothing to lose but our chains, and to gain—the whole world!"

What they meant by those words was that if they could work for shorter hours, or not at all; if they could be paid higher wages, or could receive all the money they might desire, they would be freed thereby from their chains, and would gain the whole world. Poor fools! So splendid an inscription; such hopeless misunderstanding! Are rich men free? Have rich men gained the world, or any part of it? Ask them. No need even to carry the question to the plane of ethics or of inner development. Take such universal concomitants of happiness as health and love and a contented heart. Can money buy these things? What does the Jewish workman do with his spare minutes? What better use would he make of his spare days or years?

The chains we wear are the chains of our sins; or, to put it differently, our chains have been forged by ourselves, part of our Karmic inheritance, the crop which we sowed and perforce must reap, seeing that rigid justice rules the world. By right acceptance those chains can be worn out—by right use of circumstances, by right perception of our own weaknesses and the conquest of them, by right aspiration and right effort. Not otherwise. We can gild the chains—Christian Science will do that for us; but to do that adds, in the end, to their weight and also makes them more lasting. No! there is only one way to gain the whole world, and that is to say: "I am tied and bound by the chain of my sins; may the Great Compassion help to deliver me from them! What have I done to create them? What is there in myself at this moment—of sloth, of lust, of self-love, of self-will, of pride, vanity, envy, hatred, malice—which would account for their perpetuation? How can I transform my weakness into strength, my sin into virtue, my hatred into love, my self-will into obedience, my vanity into humility and so into self-respect? There is, truly, the kingdom of heaven itself—which includes the whole world—to be gained by my self-conquest, by my spiritual regeneration; how can I get desire enough and strength enough to accomplish so great a task? Is there no spiritual power to aid me? Where can I begin—where, in this moment, can I begin?" Then, with all of heaven back of you, begin! Are you untidy? Make yourself tidy. Are you restless? Make yourself an example of repose. Are you a glutton? For love's sake—always for love's sake—conquer that. Are you a liar? Make yourself speak the truth. Are you depressed and therefore depressing

to others? Remember that "the soul of sadness is self-love." Conquer that. Make yourself smile when you feel least like it. Do violence to yourself, against yourself, in those simple ways. Thus is the kingdom taken. Undo your chains. To gain, there is the whole world: eternal life and immortal consciousness and everlasting peace.

Perhaps this will help you. It is a quotation from a letter written by St. Bernard to Guigues the Prior, and to the other monks of the Grand Chartreuse, in about the year 1125. (Human nature does not change any more than the solution of our problem.)

"For this is the property of that eternal and just law of God, that he who would not be ruled with gentleness by God, should be ruled as a punishment by his own self; and that all those who have willingly thrown off the gentle yoke and light burden of charity should bear unwillingly the intolerable burden of their own will."

But people desire a short cut. There is no short cut. The entire road must be travelled. True, it can be covered in minutes or in months, in years or in many lifetimes, depending upon the intensity of desire, upon the understanding of the task, upon the unselfishness of the motive. But there is no escape from hell except by the turning of heart and will, by the complete reversal of our lower inclinations, and then by the ascent of the terraces of Purgatory.

Yet because people desire a short cut, which in most cases does not mean that they desire to do quickly that which they see should be done, but only that they desire to escape from the unpleasant consequences of their sins without any turning from evil or from self,—there is a spirit of discontent abroad, which is the same as that which preceded the horrors of the French Revolution. It is an evil spirit. Discontent always is evil, unless directed against our own inner condition, against our own folly and blindness. But that sort of discontent is not prevalent. On the contrary, the prevalent spirit is directed against those who seem to be better off than we are; against outer conditions; against governments and particularly against *government*. It is destructive; it is self-assertive. It talks of freedom, but it means licence, and whenever it finds an opportunity, in word or in deed, it expresses itself licentiously, anarchically, viciously.

If this spirit be not either checked or transformed, it will have to be brought to a head. The Wisdom back of things will see to that. The French Revolution illustrates the law. Upheaval, more or less prolonged, is followed by reaction. The upshot of it is likely to be, in this country, an unenlightened despotism, and men blown from the muzzles of guns for outrages too horrible to contemplate. Let us, in any case, do what we can to live in such real obedience to law, both human and divine, that our words of warning may in time arouse this nation to a sense of its own danger and so perhaps avert the crisis which otherwise must come.

* * * * * * * *

Much of the responsibility for this spirit of anarchy, which permeates all classes, though manifesting differently in each, rests with modern methods of education. To describe them as principles of education would be a misnomer. Undisciplined people cannot see the need for discipline. Their chief aim in life being to have "a good time" in any way that happens to suit their mood or inclination, with but little if any regard for principles of right and wrong, it is but natural that they should evolve a theory of life that fits their own practice. The result is that the philosophy (?) of "self-expression" is used to justify its progenitors and also to serve as basis for the education of their most unfortunate human offspring. Froebel is travestied, and his reputation, which rightly is great, is used to bolster methods which differ essentially from his own. He taught that there is a higher self and a lower self, and that the purpose of education is to bring the lower self into obedience to the higher. In other words, the lower self—the body, the mind, the emotions—must be made into an obedient instrument through which the higher self can find unimpeded expression on this plane. Everything unruly, or cramped; everything running counter to the divine will; everything which is mean or low or selfish or self-indulgent, must be conquered, that the higher self may use the lower as the violinist uses his violin, or as the artist uses canvas and paint to externalize his vision of truth and beauty. It is the duty of the educator to work with the higher, and of parents to represent and to act on behalf of the higher until the personality has become sufficiently self-conscious and also sufficiently obedient to place itself voluntarily under control.

Foreign indeed to modern methods and to modern understanding! For there is no recognition of the higher, and "self-expression" is interpreted to mean that the "natural bent" of the child should be encouraged, and that, except at the cost of inconvenience to the parents, the self-will of the child should be indulged. No task should be imposed which is not agreeable, and a task which involves anything resembling hard work should be turned into play by adventitious aids. Think of a man brought up, as a child, in that way! Duty will be meaningless. Whether in business or in his home, he will regard everything which conflicts with his personal inclination as an unwarrantable imposition. He will have no love of work for its own sake; no desire to perform his task perfectly just because it is his task; no ability to infuse his task with the spirit of consecration, with the joy of self-sacrifice; no will with which to force himself, against the grain of his mood, to perform his duty cheerfully, effectively, fruitfully. Until Fate has hammered his education out of him, he is doomed to live a life of lazy, querulous discontent, and, unless Fate finally succeeds, he will become in fact if not in name an anarchist. This means an individual whose aim it is to do what he pleases with impunity, and to ignore or to abolish all authority over him, other than that which it pleases him to describe as his con-

science, but which, in his case, is the voice of his absolutely conscienceless desire.

The theory of "self-expression" has curious corollaries. One is that a child should never be given orders without full explanation of their purpose: all the reasons must be given, so that the child may understand. The cruelty as well as the folly of such procedure is well stated by Chesterton—whose sense of humor, if he possessed no other faculty, would be sufficient to save him from most of these modern lunacies. Quite recently he wrote: "In dealing with childhood, we have a right to command it—because we should kill the childhood if we convinced it."

But think also of the practical result of such training. A child should be given reasons—some people say before it obeys; others, less fantastic, say that reasons should in any case be given immediately after the child has conceded obedience. The supposed principle is that the child must understand.

Follow the child into manhood. There will be no trouble so long as there be no serious temptation. All may go well for years. Finally, however, there comes a real temptation to steal. We must suppose that the theft, if committed, will not be crude or glaring. It may be a question involving the temporary use of trust funds, to save a business which is regarded as fundamentally sound. The man who has been trained, not to obey rules whether with or without understanding, but only because he understands; who, in other words, has been taught to use his understanding as the ultimate test of right and wrong, is certain, in the circumstances I have imagined, to do the wrong thing. Probably he will land in jail. The mind, when the desire is really tempted, will always find reasons, and excellent reasons, justifying the gratification of that desire. The mind is not intended to decide; is incapable, even, of understanding, which is a separate and superior faculty. No man is trustworthy who is not drilled to obey the moral law on sight, regardless of reason and if necessary in the very face of what, in that moment, he may regard as common sense. He must be prepared to go without understanding for ten years or for ten life-times. It is his duty to obey. The understanding will come in time, but the gods alone know when.

This does not mean, of course, that the moral law—which is only another way of saying the law of the spiritual and real world—ever conflicts with reason or with common sense. That which is right invariably is wise. If we knew all the facts, not only on this plane but on inner planes, we should be able, doubtless, always to understand. But when we use our reason to decide, it means, in most cases, that consciously or unconsciously, we are looking for excuses to do the thing that we want to do, or that we have failed to recognize and to act upon the golden flash of intuition which, the moment a moral question is presented, almost invariably illumines the heart and so gives opportunity for right decision.

Children should be taught to obey their parents and their teachers, instantly and unquestioningly. Explanation should come later in some cases, but not in all, and never as the child's right.

On the other hand, while even mechanical obedience is better than none, the spirit of obedience can never be acquired by children if their parents and teachers give orders capriciously and as the expression of their own self-will. We ourselves must be obedient if we would evoke true obedience in others. The orders we give must be those which we have received. Parents ought to represent deity and should be obeyed as deity should be obeyed. But they must strive to transmit and express the divine will in small as in great: the will of the highest they recognize, which is the will, in fact, of the child's own immortal spirit. For the universe is a hierarchy, and the soul of every atom as of every man and every planet looks upward to its Master, and can rightly command only as it rightly obeys.

* * * * * * *

There is not enough of the military spirit in the religious life of today. The Salvation Army is not an exception, even on that level, because the spirit of "the Army" is the volunteer spirit and not that of the regulars. We may take West Point, in this country, as the best expression of the military ideal. Discipline is not merely enforced: it is recognized as desirable—as essential to a successful career. That is to say, the subject accepts it as beneficial, as helpful. He comes to see that the inability to go cheerfully without things is a weakness to be conquered; that he must learn to miss a meal or two without loss of temper, nerve or strength; that dependence upon any kind of creature comfort is a disgrace; that he must obey promptly, conscientiously, effectively, and that he owes this to himself, to his own self-respect, apart even from the effect on his power to command. It is learned that to be alert and vigorous in battle, a man must keep himself in proper condition during times of peace: in obedience to his ideal, he must maintain himself constantly on a war-footing. He will need recreation, but he will take that in ways which will assist and not hinder his main purpose. If he takes his profession seriously—and we must suppose that he does—to waste a moment will be a crime. Every faculty he possesses must be concentrated on the attainment of his goal, which is, to turn himself into a perfect soldier.

And we, so many of whom have pledged ourselves to a life of service, do we carry a similar spirit into the performance of our daily tasks? Do we keep before us our life's aim? Do we drill, discipline ourselves? There is a chair which exactly suits your taste. You love to lean back and take it easy. What is more, you dislike exceedingly to rise from that chair when once comfortably planted in it. Do you know what you ought to do, instead of pampering yourself with its enjoyment? You ought, without attracting the notice of others, to select a stiff, up-

right chair, with a hard seat, and deny yourself, do violence to yourself, by using it until you prefer it to the other. Then go back to the other as a penance for your vanity—because you will be pleased with yourself for so much unaccustomed virtue.

To those who have not tried it, or who have tried it half-heartedly, such a practice will seem repellant and unprofitable. Those who do such things whole-heartedly will find that strength and gladness are their immediate reward. They will find themselves not only stimulated but braced. Nothing in fact is done properly until it is done with gladness in the doing and with gladness as a result. It is the half-doing of things which accounts for most of our fatigue, depression, and sense of failure. The lukewarm always have been anathema—"shadows not yet ascended into Hell." But they curse themselves far more effectually than they have ever been cursed, for they distil misery from air which, breathed deeply, is alive with the spring-time of eternity, and, by flabbiness of foothold, find the broad walks of Paradise, treacherous and unreal.

Are we lukewarm? Are you? Often I ask myself, Am I? And in some respect or other, every one of us is. In that particular direction we are both unsuccessful and unhappy. The remedy lies in right identification, and in the clearer recognition of our real aims. We are not these lazy personalities, these indifferent minds, these blasé emotions: we are, on the contrary, souls who see and know, who love and who desire, and whose life-purpose it is to bring our personalities into harmonious relations with the world of truth and fact.

It is not, however, in the way of self-discipline only that the military spirit is needed. The religious life is full of romance, of adventure. It demands daring, reckless dash, fierce onslaught, as well as endurance and grim determination. It demands strategy and foresight, bold imagination and the most careful attention to detail. I am not speaking now of external work; of great missionary enterprises or of organized "fishing" for souls. I am speaking of the inner life; of self-conquest on the one hand, and of self-realization on the other. To gain, there is the whole world. But the world can be gained only by the discovery that we are already in possession of it, and any such discovery must remain impossible until, from the vantage ground of the real, we look down and see the world as in the hollow of our hand. Differently expressed, we have to fight our way through the thick veils which cover our hearts and therefore our vision—veils of our own weaving—and so, without change of place or circumstance, learn that the kingdom of heaven is here, not there; that we are in it and of it; that the world we have thought to be real is no more than a mist which our own distorted mind-sight has projected; that the things and persons we have imagined as spiritual, are spiritual, but that this means, in fact, more tense and powerful, more solid and substantial, than the material bodies and forces which imperfect vision has failed to penetrate, but which, seen from above,

are like lines on a flat surface—significant of reality, suggestive and perhaps beautifully suggestive of still greater beauties known to us.

Such splendid things are done for King and country! Need there be so few to follow the blood-red banner of a King Immortal? Life is spent like water in that warfare; life is given but life is gained a thousand-fold in this. Where are those generous hearts which, ready to die, will live and labor for a great ideal; careless of reward, will find it in the triumph of their Leader? Is chivalry dead, or are there not still many who will answer the call of need with a leap to the sword of Obedience? Have we not ears? Are we deaf to the clarion blast of the Warrior, battle-stained but joyous, looking to us to follow as he hurls himself again and yet again upon the enemies of heaven? Men, men, where are men? It is not saints that are needed. No man thinking himself good could be of any use at all. But men who can catch fire; men who can forget themselves in an enthusiasm of hope—quenchless, flaming passion of hope; men who will be tortured but who will not betray; men who are fearless, men who are valorous, men indomitable, men who are men! Above all, perhaps, the man who says—"I am none of that, but I wish to be. I am unfit and unworthy and I know it. I am neither brave nor good. But to serve so great a Leader in his need —to be made fit to serve him—I will give my life and my all."

There was a toast once drunk in England: "That the king may come into his own!" It was a cause worth fighting for, but nothing in comparison with this. And if the appeal seem vague; if there be doubt as to what to do, what step next to take—find out: a man of will would, a man of will can. There is so common-place a means as the mail! But in this case as always, "ask and ye shall receive; knock and it shall be opened unto you." Souls honored by the world as its heroes, just and perfect spirits of the past, look down and envy us our opportunity.

T.

" We make little actions great by performing them with a great desire to please God; the merit of our services consisting, not in excellency of the works, but in the love which accompanies them."

St. Francis of Sales.

ELEMENTARY ARTICLE

We Create Our Limitations.

III.

TO pick up the thread of our theme:

The purpose of Life is conscious reunion with God. This is the ultimate destiny of every soul. There are barriers in the way, which we ourselves created in the past by breaking Divine Law, and especially by the exercise of self-will, as opposed to Divine Will. We were given free will because it was necessary to enable us to become self-conscious. In the process of becoming self-conscious through the exercise of free will, we broke many of the laws of God. This made barriers; clouded our vision; gave rise to ignorance; created limitations. Then pain arose, to play its beneficent part; pain being the whip used by Life to drive us back upon the Path,—the friction caused by the rubbing of our wills against the Divine Will. We cause our own suffering, for we created the ignorance and limitations which produce suffering. But owing to Divine Compassion, this suffering burns away the limitations, gives rise to understanding, and as we understand, and act upon our understanding, pain ceases and we find joy.

In the previous sections we described the Purpose of Life, the Meaning of Pain, and the fact that we cause our own suffering; suffering, which arises from ignorance, the ignorance being due to our limitations. We now want to show that we cause our own limitations, that each one of us is solely responsible for the barriers which separate him from God.

It is not easy to see this because we seem to be hampered in so many ways by other people, by circumstances, by conditions over which we have no control and for the creation of which we are not responsible.

The fallacy is in thinking that the circumstances and conditions for which we are not responsible, really do hamper and thwart our evolution, our inner growth. They do not. They only seem to us to do so, because they limit the freedom of our free will. Indeed the exact opposite is the fact. Instead of these circumstances and conditions being obstacles to our growth, they provide us with the very means we need in order to go forward. They are rungs up the ladder which leads to Heaven. No, the real barriers are never in circumstances, but are in ourselves, in our minds, our hearts, our wills; and these are all self-created. If we have a bad temper, it is because we did not exercise self-control in the past;

if we are gluttons, it is because we indulged our love of food; if we are sensual, it is because of previous lack of self-restraint; if we lack perception, it is because we dulled our faculties by abuse of some kind. Therefore, whether our barrier is the presence of a fault, or the absence of a virtue,—and we all have barriers of both these kinds,—it is directly traceable to repeated infraction of some spiritual law. It can, therefore, be laid down as an invariable rule that each human being could see and walk with God if it were not for his limitations, and that without exception, these limitations are self-created. I know of only one exception. It is possible voluntarily to accept limitations which will temporarily make inner communion impossible. Jesus did this as the culmination of His sacrifice. He gave up everything, even His consciousness of the Father. There was a period during the crucifixion when His power was gone, and He had to depend solely upon the integrity and strength of His moral nature for victory over the powers of evil. His was a tremendous responsibility, for if there had been a single flaw in His armor of righteousness, the dark powers would have won. This explains something of the agony of the Passion, and of that mysterious cry from the Cross, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Similarly it is said that in order to be properly equipped for some special piece of work in the world, disciples will voluntarily surrender much of their power and consciousness and will accept whatever limitations are a necessary part of the task they have to perform. St. Francis of Assisi's fervent devotion to Lady Poverty, and his tender and gentle sympathy for all forms of suffering, would ill equip him to act as Emperor of Germany if the Master should need him to incarnate for such a purpose. He would keep his splendid courage, his tenacity of purpose, his will, his devotion to duty and many other qualities and powers, for they would be appropriate and useful, but surely veils would be drawn over other qualities and powers which would make his mission incongruous, if not impossible.

Similiarly, if the Master wants to found a religious Order, which will combine the fervor and devotion of the monk with the courage and spirit of the soldier, a different combination of qualities is called for. There should be more interior illumination than would be needed for a purely secular ruler, but there should not be so great a horror of suffering as to prevent the vigorous prosecution of a campaign.

There is, of course, a stage of development when all qualities and powers are so well controlled and can be exercised at will in such an impersonal manner that any necessary work will be done without hindrance from one's nature. The messengers of God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah by fire, as part of one day's work. The afternoon of that same day may well have been spent in inspiring a poet to write a great poem, or in increasing the fervor of a convent of nuns. The full disciple must be ready to do any task, great or small, at the bidding of his master.

There are, however, natural aptitudes and qualifications among all

grades of disciples, and we may be quite sure that these are taken fully into account and that we shall be assigned the kind of work we love to do and for which we are best qualified. Only we must not let self-will enter here. The Master knows our real powers much better than we do, and we must accept cheerfully his assignment of duty with the serene confidence that, however it may appear to us who see only the surface, it is in fact not only what we are best fitted for, but also what will make us happiest and most satisfied.

Outer Limitations Never Barriers

We cannot repeat or emphasize too often the twin statements, first, that we create our own barriers, and, second, that the limitations and circumstances existing outside ourselves never are barriers. It is necessary to elaborate this latter doctrine, for it is one of the fundamental facts of the spiritual world, and is also one of the failures to appreciate which causes infinite distress and delay, especially with beginners.

Many students of the art of living are willing to accept this statement as a theory. They give it mental assent when it is considered in cold blood; but a moment afterwards let something unpleasant happen, and they deny it in action. Even the advanced disciple has not fully conquered this inevitable tendency of the human mind to blame circumstances for lack of success,—to resent what we call misfortune, to be impatient at delay, to be irritated over events, to pity himself when in pain, to be discouraged by failure. Indeed, so long as we have any "lower" nature left, we shall continue to react from the events of life and the conditions of our environment in some such ways. One important test of progress is our freedom from these reactions. We can ask ourselves if we are free from self-pity, from resentment against Fate or other individuals, from impatience, irritation, discouragement. Only the Master of Life can say, Yes! The disciple, even the saint, must answer, "I have made progress in these directions, but there are still moments when I forget that outer events are never limitations; that everything that happens is absolutely for the best, in this best of all possible worlds."

As this is so important a subject, we must get at it in every way we can. Our Master, with a wisdom which seems to us miraculous, looks us over, and weighing and balancing all the forces of our nature, moulds and guides events to produce situations calling for the display of those qualities we lack and must develop, or which stimulate those faults we must learn to conquer,—the evil in us often must be brought to the surface before it can be recognized and cured. What is our frequent response? An immediate resentment, a feeling that we are being hardly used, that too much is being put upon us, that Fate is unkind, that we are having a much harder time than others, that if He wants to to do a certain work He must provide conditions which will make it possible and free us from those circumstances which thwart all our best efforts. Cannot we imagine the tender pity and compassionate forgiveness with which He

watches our reaction; but cannot we also imagine the little tug at His heart with which He views the reception we give to His effort to help us? For remember that He is human as well as Divine, and we know from our own experience how hurt and pained we are when our effort to help another is misunderstood, is rejected, and is resented. It is dreadful to contemplate the endless suffering we must cause our Master by our stupidity and our failures in this respect It must form a large part of the Cross which we force Him to bear.

It is a question of the mind; another case where the "Mind is the great Slayer of the Real," so our problem is to weave into the very fabric of our being an ever growing realization of the fact that outside events cannot be barriers, but are always helps. We must never drop from our consideration any given event until we see the truth so far as it is concerned. It is here that prayer and meditation will help us, for by means of prayer and meditation we rise above the lower mind and its limited and prejudiced vision, and can see things as they really are, from the standpoint of the spiritual world. We should make a practice, at our time of self-examination, of reviewing the events of every day, and of noting how wrongly we reacted in such and such an event because instinctively we regarded it as a barrier, or limitation, or misfortune, and not as a Heaven-sent opportunity for our advancement. If we fail to see how that particular event was an opportunity, and not a hindrance, then we should pray and meditate about it until it becomes clear. Often a spiritual director is a most valuable aid, for he can see the matter dispassionately as we cannot; so if after honest effort we cannot discover the solution for ourselves, then we should consult our advisor. We must learn that there are no exceptions to the rule, that the universe is made that way, and that our failure to understand is only a failure to understand, and does not mean that in our special case the universe is running backward.

It is a hard lesson to learn, but it can be done, and it must be done; for progress, even from the very beginning of the way, is hampered by failure to realize it, and becomes impossible after a certain point. Sooner or later our destiny will hang upon this single issue.

Another and very important phase of the subject must not be overlooked, and that is the immense amount of suffering this point of view will save. If you consider carefully the cause of a very large part of human pain, you will find it is not caused by hunger or disease, or injury or any direct physical means, but by our kicks against the pricks of Fate, by our revolt against the conditions of our lives. Probably more than half of human misery is self-created in this way, and would disappear entirely with a serene acceptance of the decrees of Fate.

C. A. G.

The Problem of Christianity, by Josiah Royce, published in two volumes, being the Hibbert Lectures delivered in 1913. The first of these (subtitled *The Christian Doctrine of Life*), is untechnical, and can be read with pleasure and fully appreciated by any thoughtful reader untrained in philosophical subtleties: the second (*The Real World and the Christian Ideas*) is avowedly an examination of the conclusions empirically reached in the first volume, by modern metaphysical idealism,—and, we may add, by the technical method peculiar to Professor Royce himself. From the point of view of one who is seeking in modern developments the reawakening to the spiritual world, this very sincere effort of a leading philosopher to approach a strictly religious problem is sufficiently significant in itself, however far short of satisfaction his conclusions may be. Professor Royce writes that he has "approached this study, not as an historian, nor as a theologian, but as a philosopher," and therefore as such only can he be criticised with fairness. This emphasis which he lays on his work, however, makes what he has done another noteworthy indication of the trend towards religion and religious things. For a "pure" philosopher, and only that, to have responded so far to the outer stimulus of the world's attitude as to turn consciously and deliberately to a study of the Christian religion, not merely for personal satisfaction, but through a recognition of the universality of its principles and ideals, is a totally new step, and one representing a very different attitude from that formerly maintained by the philosophers, even those who discussed religion at all. No longer antagonized by crude dogmas and narrow institutions, philosophy seems to be waking to an appreciation of what the great truths of Christianity comprehend, and is starting forth to find interpretations of them in her own terms. Professor Royce holds in this respect, however, a different position from Bergson and Eucken; for while these, each in his own way, are pioneers of our generation, Professor Royce represents a traditional philosophical school, and has long been identified with a particular technical system. If, then, we find that the leaven of today will accomplish a reinvigoration and inspiriting of the old systems, or, in other words, that the new spirit will use out-worn tools for its own higher ends, does not this contribution of Professor Royce assume a special and richer meaning, and give us one more confirmation of the transforming and regenerative power of spiritual forces?

Professor Royce traces in outline the growth of his own convictions since the publication of his earlier works, and says that he has reached his present conclusions through developments of his "philosophy of loyalty," first appearing in 1908. "My efforts to grasp and expound the religion of loyalty have at length led me, in this book, to views concerning the essence of Christianity such that, if they have any truth, they need to be carefully considered." Those familiar with this Philosophy of Loyalty will welcome its application to Christianity; if only because the spiritual truth, of which this is an "idealistic" expression, is at one with the very heart of what the Master stood for and represented. "Loyalty, as I have elsewhere defined it," says Professor Royce, "is the willing and thorough-

going devotion of a self to a cause, when the cause is something that unites many selves in one, and which is therefore the interest of the community." This community becomes for the Christian what Professor Royce calls "the Beloved Community," which in essence is a restricted interpretation of the Kingdom of Heaven as taught by Christ, or, more specifically, of St. Paul's commentary on it in his doctrines of the Church. The practical realization of this Beloved Community, and loyalty to it, is actually and historically the central Christian doctrine. Thus "Christian love, as Paul conceives it, takes on the form of loyalty (to the Church or Beloved Community): this is Paul's simple but vast transformation of Christian love." We have no intention of attempting to criticise either the construction of Professor Royce's theory or of his individual opinions;—he is entitled to them, and to respect for his fearless utterance of them—our criticism must necessarily be directed against his whole position and approach to such a subject; for the rest, our purpose is to present briefly his views, and to examine such as we believe to be most significant.

Basing all his subsequent theories, then, on a belief in the existence of this Beloved Community, and holding up before its members the ideal of a complete and perfect loyalty to this Community, Professor Royce proceeds to state clearly his problem, and to seek for its answer first in the world of life about him, and secondly in the framing of a metaphysical system, in harmony, as far as he can see, with the facts, and also conforming with the philosophical idealism of which he has for so long been the expounder. "When we consider what are the most essential features of Christianity, is the acceptance of a creed that embodies these features consistent with the lessons that, so far as we can yet learn, the growth of human wisdom and the course of the ages have taught man regarding religious truth?" To throw light on this, three characteristic Christian ideas are analyzed and reinterpreted; salvation, original sin, and atonement. The whole trend of his argument is to show that true loyalty requires no creed, but can use any; that "the name of Christ has always been, for the Christian believers, the symbol for the Spirit in whom the faithful—that is to say the loyal—always are and have been one"; that "the Christology of the future cannot permanently contain the traditional forms which have heretofore dominated the history both of dogma, and of the visible Christian Church." Such an appeal to the spirit of Christ rather than to the standards of the various churches, coming as it does from outside the official ranks of any church, should act as a challenge to all of them; and we note with interest that several pastors and clergymen are speaking and writing in praise of just this point.

In his treatment of the above-mentioned topics, Professor Royce has shown both originality and vision. Salvation, he says, is possible through union with this spiritual community; the purpose of the members of which community being the means whereby the self-will and egotism of us all, which are the product of our social life and daily conflict with our fellows, are raised and transmuted to a higher, purer, loving, common will, united in the one great aim and will of the community. Original sin, and the one hopeless and irretrievable sin, is deliberate disloyalty. A conscious, self-accusing traitor can never feel that he may by any possible future acts obliterate the fact of his disloyalty, or make things as though it were not. Atonement becomes, then, a different problem from that usually conceived by the theologian; it cannot merely be forgiveness resulting from a sacrificial act of suffering on the part of the community, because, however generous and self-effacing the suffering and forgiveness may be, it cannot free the individual from his own inner "hell of the irrevocable"; but atonement, or specifically an atoning act, must step in and *use* that very traitorous deed, must start with that, and build from and with it some good for the community, which *without* that traitorous deed could never have been accomplished for the community. Then, and then only, can the traitor feel "my deed has actually been

a source of benefit to the community, such that, if I had not been faithless, the community would not be so well off. I can now renew my union with the community, freed through this atonement from my hideous past." This is what Jesus did and does for us; this is the atoning power of grace. His atoning deed, through his sacrifices, won again the lost causes of our moral world by creating new good out of existing evil, opening to us a future life that will be the better and richer for the very fact of our old evil and the existence, as a result of it, of the atonement.

The above brief outline gives the best of what Professor Royce has achieved, and can mostly be found in the first volume. The second volume centers around a purely technical exposition of how these theories can be brought under a "sound" metaphysical system through the agency of a new method of knowing, neither "perception," nor "conception," but "interpretation." As a psychologic study Professor Royce's exposition is interesting; but it fails to carry conviction because he never raises the technical idealistic terms which he employs, above the plane of unproved philosophical theorizing; and he emphatically opposes Bergson's intuition on the one hand, and the inspiration of the mystics on the other. Professor Royce contests that interpretation is a constant act of life, in that we "interpret" common experience, either to ourselves or to another, when we see some meaning in it. But this whole process which he describes in detail is limited to the mental realm of ideas; no pure Bergsonian perception, no direct mystic or spiritual illumination can enter the interpretative act at all. Thus Professor Royce has deliberately shut himself within the mind, and however beautiful or attractive may be the results he has obtained on that plane, we fail to see that he has done more than give to the world one more metaphysical theory and one more opportunity for endless discussion, theorizing, and ratiocination. At the heart of his thought lie glimpses of spiritual truths: as his vision of the Beloved Community, and his recognition of our dependence on and need for the atoning power of the Master. One feels that Professor Royce has had genuine experience; and if he could only relieve himself of his philosophical mind, if he could use the vision he has already received to adventure further into a knowledge of the truths of Christ instead of attempting to frame it in some cramped metaphysical system, and if he could cease to subject it to the sceptical analysis of an all too prejudiced mind, he could profit both himself and his many followers very greatly. But this criticism applies to almost all philosophy; and we should, perhaps, remind ourselves that Professor Royce has made a distinct contribution in the direction of raising philosophical thought, and we should be grateful to him for at least turning men's thoughts towards religion and religious things. JOHN BLAKE, JR.

Dharma: This tasteful little magazine of our Spanish brothers continues to maintain the high standard of excellence with which it started. In the April number there are four reprints from the earlier magazines; one by Mr. Judge, two by Mr. Johnston, and one from the pen of Katharine Hillard. The leading article is on "Theosophy and Christianity," by Roman Grim, and points out that there can be and is no vital antagonism between the two; always a valuable theme to keep before our readers. Other articles are: one on Norman Angell's new book *The Great Illusion;* a "Dialogue," which discusses certain questions asked about writings of Madame Blavatsky,—with frequent quotations from *The Secret Doctrine;* and "The Mystery of Christianity"—an imaginative conversation occurring at Ephesus. The "Notes and Comments" are of value, well-written and interesting. There is also a "Questions and Answers" department. Thus this issue is well-balanced, and contains a variety of helpful and interesting contributions,—both old and new. A. G.

The April *Theosophisches Leben* has an enviable table of contents. Five articles from the QUARTERLY are translated by the indefatigable Editors, and reprinted. Especially notable is the translation of a "Fragment" by Cavé, which in a remarkable way reproduces the beauty and atmosphere peculiar to that wonderful writer. There is an exceedingly able article on "Christ and the Holy Supper" by Paul Raatz; and one on "Joy" by Ernst Traumer, which the reviewer found very helpful. Other valuable articles, including several short poems, fill up the pages. The Editors should also be congratulated on the bibliography of Theosophical books, and also of other works that would appeal to our readers. This is not merely a list of titles, but each volume is characterized briefly, so that we are in possession of the scope and purpose of each book at a glance.

A. G.

Pro Christo et Ecclesia, by the author of *Absente Reo,* published by Macmillans. This little book has a double interest. We are presented with the striking thought, backed up by the most recent expert research, that the "Pharisees condemned in the Gospels were God-fearing, earnest, and conscientious," and not the utterly bad and hypocrital sect that ordinarily we think them. The author suggests that the reason for Christ's wholesale condemnation lay not in the individual wickedness of the Pharisees, who were according to their lights above the average standard morally and religiously, but in the fact that it is the very defects and narrowness of the most religious people that are the foes and murderers of the Christ. Thus the Sadducees were merely moderate and stagnant; they raised no opposition, and, like all sinners, were open to conversion and a change of heart. But the Pharisees were pride-blind in their supreme confidence that they knew the will of God, and lived it to the best of their ability; they were selfish, because their hearts were closed to the claim of sinners upon God's love, through their self-confidence, which position is born of spiritual pride; and, finally, they were intense ritualists, dependent on their ritualism because they had lost the significance of its symbology. But they were the most religious people of that time, the most earnest, the most whole-hearted.

Jesus saw pride to be the fundamental sin; he knew humility to be the requisite of all earthly love. So, while not condemning the law and tradition, which are needful and helpful to weak humanity, he condemned mercilessly those who shielded themselves behind the law and denounced others as sinners and outcasts.

The second point of interest is the lesson which the author draws from this contrast of Christ's attitude and the Pharisaic. "The terrible warnings of Jesus make it evident that he was oppressed by a vision of the future Church strewn with the wrecks of faith." "The pharisaic retort that his inspiration was Satanic was most natural, as is proved by examining what our feeling would be if he came now and crossed our beliefs to the same extent." Indeed, the picture drawn of the Church today, with its assurance, its exclusive party factions, its blindness to the inner spiritual call to immediate fellowship with Christ, is a living counterpart of all those sins Jesus so emphatically condemned in the Pharisees.

The book provokes serious thought. It is a wholesome challenge to the existing order in the churches. The writing is vivid and clear; there is breadth of view and the contagion of a deep personal conviction on the part of the author. On the whole we agree with him. The book is timely, and should be very helpful to those seeking the church's ideal.

JOHN NEWCOMBE.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION 172.—*Is the next environment of the soul determined by chance? If not, how is it determined?*

ANSWER.—Once I was in a school superintendent's office when a lot of children, whose parents had just moved into town, were being questioned. The superintendent rapidly assigned each child to that school and that grade best suited for it, being helped by the child's own desire, as modified by his trained knowledge of its need. May we not suppose that God would be as competent? "But there are so many of us" may be suggested. Mr. Blaine was said to know over 100,000 men by name and position. His brain was finite—what could not a Master's brain hold? Besides would not the soul help? Would it not seek of the Master that school and grade where it would learn the most? The soul untrammeled by the body, uncolored by the mind, must seek the shortest road to Union with the Master in the perfected obedience of recognized discipleship —call it Heaven if you prefer. It would, therefore, ask for the most trying opportunity to learn the fastest, to get rid the soonest, of all barriers self-erected through ignorance and lack of discipline. H. K.

ANSWER.—The next environment of the soul is determined by the needs of that soul. If the soul lack development in a certain direction it will sooner or later have to come back to an environment which affords opportunity for the development of that which it lacked. The ultimate goal being the perfect flowering of each soul—or union with the divine. M. T.

ANSWER.—The universe exists for the soul, is ideally designed for the development and growth of the soul. This naturally includes the immediate environment of each soul. That is determined for the soul by the particular needs of that individual soul. In a sense we determine absolutely our own future environment. What we think, feel, wish and do determines what we become; as what we have done heretofore has determined what we now are. What we are determines what we need, what we need determines what we get, our environment and all that comes to us. D. d'A.

ANSWER.—If this be a spiritual universe, governed by law, what is the meaning of Chance? Has it any meaning? Remember Emerson's fine phrase: "All things, even motes and feathers, go by law and not by luck." J. C.

ANSWER.—It seems to me the next environment would be determined by the needs of a soul. Karma is the compassionate law of a compassionate God. A wise and loving Teacher examines the task submitted by a pupil. The task may be done in such a way as to show that the pupil is ready for advancement; or, on the contrary, he may need to be demoted. But whatever the next step be, progress or retardation, it is Love and Wisdom (they are identical) that determine it.

S. M.

ANSWER.—The next environment of the soul is not determined by chance. It is the deliberate choice of the Soul. In its previous incarnations the Soul has woven several vestures. These vestures are not fixed but living and interchanging according to the forces which compose them. When the time comes for the Soul to again assume its garments of mortality, these vestures are assumed and matter is precipitated upon them by the terms of vibratory activity which they possess and by which the growth of the unborn and then the growing infant are determined. As an example by analogy study the Voice-figures of Mrs. Hughes.

A. K.

ANSWER.—If we admit such a thing as "chance" anywhere into the universe, we admit chaos. There is and can be no such thing. Either the universe from top to bottom is spiritual life (which, seen in its parts, appears as a congeries of great laws), or it is nothing at all.

Karma is the Sanscrit name given to that aspect of the spiritual life which governs the effects to follow given causes,—be they physical, psychic, mental, moral, and spiritual, or all these combined. Our next life is determined by the causes or actions which we ourselves have set going through the use of our free wills, in previous lives. Most of us have no idea what all these forces are. We are told that through the vicarious atonement of its members, The Lodge of Masters can interfere (relatively, as they themselves, and their power, come within a still more embracing Karma) with our personal Karma; by holding back evil till we have had time to strengthen the good in us, or by precipitating the evil if we are capable of faster progress, and desire to push ahead of our normal advance by more strenuous efforts and by more immediate suffering. There are no hard and fast rules; so each one of us would do well to examine our past with the intention of seeing just what it is that our environment has sought to teach us, that is, our *souls*. If we can find out what it is that we have to learn, what faults to overcome, what vision to acquire, we can work with our Karma instead of struggling blindly against what appears to so many as an evil fate. And we must not forget that there is "good" Karma as well as "bad"; too many accept the "good" complacently as a right, and reserve their rebellion and bad feelings for the bad." Union with the Master, with the Divine, sonship with the Father,—this alone will free us from the necessity of rebirth, which subjects us to the earth's physical Karma. Then we can live free, under the higher Karma, the divine harmony of the Heavenly Kingdoms.

G. HIJO, JR.

ANSWER.—The next environment of the soul, like the present and all past environments, from moment to moment, is determined by the soul's real needs. At each moment we are precisely where we ought to be. He is wise who recognizes this, and seeks in each situation and environment, in each moment, the soul's lesson for that moment. For him, every moment of life is magical.

C. J.

ANSWER.—Does not this depend upon the desire of the Soul? If it wants something very much, won't it seek to get it? Is the doctrine of Freedom of Will compatible with any other theory? Personally, I believe that I have always wanted to be with the people I am with and that I particularly chose to "suffer" the "trials" of my present lot or, as it sounds nearer the truth, to enjoy the opportunities of my present lot. I do not believe there was any chance about it. It amuses my Mother when I say I long since—ages ago—picked her out; but I mean it quite simply. I believe I have wanted and will always want to serve with and fight for certain people—Souls, Egos; call them what you please—and I intend to stay with them. I believe that we are brought together again and again because we belong together. In short, Karma and reincarnation make

Death a manifestation of Divine Love and Life a wisely-guided course of lessons; because chance, injustice and cruelty are removed from the Universe. If I could learn not to dissipate force, energy, love entrusted to me, would not I rejoice to starve to death a few times to acquire so great a virtue, and to make me more serviceable? G. V. S. M.

QUESTION 173.—*Is the theory of reincarnation necessarily reincarnation upon this earth? If so, does this process continue indefinitely, or does the soul at some period pass to a totally different environment?*

ANSWER.—What difference does it make? To me reincarnation on this earth is the only kind, logical explanation on scientific lines of why we exist. It explains love of family and friends, and makes one's environment a Heaven sent opportunity, not something to be grumbled about or neglected. I like to think that those I love I have loved before and will love again and always in contiguity. This takes the sting out of death. In fact, I believe it demonstrable that the Bible, both in the Old and the New Testament, teaches the doctrine of reincarnation. Limited (for the time being at least) to this earth it falls into correspondence with the law of the conservation of energy and matter. The sins I commit give me experience—the doctrine of reincarnation eliminates waste. As to the future "when God wills" I suppose I may go somewhere else, but I want at least a few lives here on earth to try to clean the slate—until I do, I want the process to continue indefinitely. G. V. S. M.

ANSWER.—As the earth is only a part of this great universe, and the soul must have all experiences, does it stand to reason that the soul would always return to the limitations of this earth? Would it not naturally outgrow them? Also are there not visible and invisible bodies? A. F.

ANSWER.—The essence of reincarnation is the continuous growth of the soul, the development of its inherent powers and the elimination of its weaknesses, through its own efforts. Whether the environment that provides it with this opportunity for continuous growth is on this earth or on Mars is, from one point of view, quite immaterial. The point is that this opportunity is provided, this necessity imposed. When we have exhausted the lessons that life on earth has to teach doubtless we shall pass on. Obviously however one life or one hundred lives are too short to learn all that may be learned here. We do but scratch the surface of life's richness. We have been told that the soul here on earth may attain to heights of growth and splendour of which we do not yet even dream.

Here on earth it is in our power to choose for ourselves between environments farther apart than earth is from heaven's remotest star. We may dwell in our hearts and minds surrounded by our own most evil passions, hatred and greed and lust. Or we may, like Brother Lawrence, dwell in the presence of God and be consciously with the Master surrounded by His infinite love and tender care in each moment of our lives. J. F. B. M.

QUESTION 174.—*"What is the difference between a religious Order, a Congregation and a Community? The three words seem at times to be used interchangeably."*

ANSWER.—It is not easy to draw a sharp distinction between an Order and a Congregation, although the dictionaries are mistaken when they state that there is no difference. The trouble is, (a), that the words are often, but incorrectly, used as synonymous and (b) that their present meanings are the result of some hundreds of years of evolution and they did not always have the significance which they have now.

Five hundred years ago the difference was quite simple and arose from the reform movements within regular Orders. For example, a group of Benedictine Monasteries would associate themselves together to practise a stricter mode of life, to return to the observance of the primative Rule—as, for instance, the Maurists, under St. Maur, or the Cluniacs under the leadership of the great Abbots of Cluny; and they were called Congregations. In other words, a Congregation was a segregation of monasteries, or individuals, within an Order. In time, however, some of these reform movements became so important that they were separated from the parent body and raised to the dignity of an Order. Then the distinction between the two terms became more a question of privilege, as, for instance, whether they should be free from episcopal jurisdiction or not; the Orders, almost without exception, alone obtaining this jealously restricted right. In time this distinction also broke down to a considerable extent, although it still marks one line of cleavage. The next important difference was a question of the solemnity and term of vows taken by the members. All the Orders, with practically no exception, had solemn and perpetual vows, while Congregations were associations of priests, like the Oratorians, founded by St. Philip Neri, who live under a common rule but take no vows; or of laymen or women, like the Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul, who take annual vows. Since the 16th Century practically all the religious associations which have received the sanction of the Papacy have been Congregations and not Orders.

To generalize, therefore, and to sum up; the word Order is used to designate the more highly developed and completely realized association, which has received full papal sanction and the most extensive privileges. A Congregation is not a fully realized religious association because of some limitation in its government, its rights, its practices or its purposes.

The word *Community* has no technical meaning in this connection. It is applied to any given group of religious who live together, or have a common purpose.

The term *Confraternity* has, however, a technical meaning. It is a voluntary association of the faithful, established and guided by competent ecclesiastical authority, for the promotion of special objects of charity or piety. Priests, members of Religious Orders or Congregations, or laymen may belong to one or to several Confraternities. The League of the Sacred Heart and the Apostleship of Prayer and the Sacred Name Society are Confraternities. C. A. G.

QUESTION 175.—*"What is the difference between a Priest, a Deacon, a Monk, a Friar, a Canon or Canon Regular, a Clerk or Clerk Regular and a Tertiary or Lay-Brother? What are the feminine equivalents of these terms?"*

ANSWER.—In the Roman Catholic Church which is the only organization which includes all these terms:—

A *Priest* is a man who has taken Holy Orders. He is under a Bishop, a member of the Church as a whole, and need not and usually does not belong to any Religious Order or Congregation. Technically speaking, only a Bishop is truly a Priest of the highest grade, for certain functions, such as confirmation, ordination and the consecration of Churches, are reserved to him. The ordinary priest, therefore, belongs to the second degree of priesthood. He has powers conferred upon him, rather than rights, and in the Roman Catholic Church he requires the consent of his bishop before he can exercise any of the sacerdotal functions, save, perhaps, that of saying Mass.

A *Deacon.* In modern times the diaconate has ceased to be anything but a stage of preparation for the priesthood. In the Catholic Church he can minister at High Mass, can expose the Blessed Sacrament at Benediction, and in case of need, can act as deputy of the Parish priest in distributing the Communion.

In the Episcopal Church, a Deacon can perform any priestly sacred office, save consecrating the elements and pronouncing absolution.

A *Monk,* who may or may not be a priest, is a man who dedicates himself to a life of religious contemplation and endeavor, in a community devoted to this purpose, secluded from the world, taking the three solemn vows in perpetuity. His allegiance is to his abbot and his particular Monastery where he usually spends the rest of his life. His object is personal perfection, and to this end he renounces the world and all natural affections. Monks do not, as a rule, however, refuse the cure of souls or other secular occupations, when the necessity arises, and have often busied themselves with education, the preservation of learning, with agriculture in its widest sense, and with other useful work. The Benedictine Monks are responsible for the preservation of learning during the Dark Ages.

A *Friar* is a member of one of the Mendicant Orders, like the Franciscans or Dominicans. He may or may not be a Priest. He combines a religious life of contemplation with work for the Church. He is not a member of any community, but of the whole Order and is moved about from place to place at the will of his superiors. He is a soldier in a religious army, governed by a hierarchy of local, provincial and general superiors.

A *Canon Regular* is a Priest, attached to a Church, but who also lives a religious life under Rule and Vows. With Monks, Holy Orders are accidental and secondary, and are superadded to the religious life; with Canons Regular the Holy Orders are the principal thing and the religious life is superadded.

A *Clerk Regular* is a combination of a Canon Regular and a Friar. First of all he is a priest, in dress and mode of life, doing all the duties suitable to priests; but to this he adds a religious life with the usual vows. He is not, like a Canon Regular, attached to a Church, or like a monk, attached to a Monastery, but, like a Friar, he is a member of a religious army and is, therefore, free to go anywhere his superiors direct. The Jesuits are Clerks Regular.

A *Tertiary or Lay-Brother* is a member of an Order who has taken simple vows. The practice of having lay-men and lay-women associated with regular monastic establishments, under a modified Rule and simple vows, arose in the Twelfth Century. The Franciscans were the first to have a regular Third Order. In time some of these rose in dignity and importance and the vows became solemn vows, the members living a community life hardly less rigid and severe than that of the First Order. All Orders do not have lay members; neither the Benedictines nor the Jesuits have Tertiaries; but as a rule all the Orders having women members also have a third order. A tertiary may remain such all his life or he may be raised to the rank of full membership.

There are no feminine equivalents for most of these terms. In the old days when Orders were formed which did not contemplate their members taking Holy Orders, the Rule was as suitable for women as for men, so that there were Benedictine nuns and Convents as soon as there were Benedictine Monks and Monasteries; but when the Mendicant Orders and Clerks Regular were formed, whose Rules were entirely unsuitable for women, the founders either expressly forbade nuns, as in the case of the Jesuits, or wrote a special rule for them, as in the case of St. Francis, who was the first to found a regular Second Order for women. Since then special Orders have been founded exclusively for women, such as the Order of the Visitation, founded by St. Francis de Sales, and the Ursulines. Many of these have lay-sisters who follow a modified rule of varying strictness. There is no rigid distinction between the terms Sister and Nun, but as a rule a Nun is more or less cloistered while a Sister goes out into the world to nurse or teach. In many Orders the members are called Sisters to distinguish them from the Mother Superior. In other Orders all the nuns are Mothers and the lay-members are Sisters. C. A. G.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society was held at 21 Macdougal Alley, New York City, on Saturday, April 25, 1914. The Convention was called to order at 10.30 A. M. by Mr. Charles Johnston, Chairman of the Executive Committee.

MORNING SESSION

Temporary organization was effected, when, upon motion of Mr. E. T. Hargrove, seconded by Mr. C. A. Griscom, Mr. Charles Johnston was elected Chairman, and upon motion of Prof. H. B. Mitchell, duly seconded, Mr. K. D. Perkins was made Secretary.

Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell's motion that the Chair appoint a Committee on Credentials, being adopted by vote,—the Chairman appointed the Secretary of the Society (Mrs. Gregg), the Treasurer (Prof. Mitchell), and Miss Isabel E. Perkins, to examine the credentials submitted by delegates and to report to the Convention as soon as their duties could be concluded.

Address of Welcome

In greeting the delegates, Mr. Johnston said: "On behalf of the Executive Committee, and in the name of the New York Branch, it gives me great pleasure to extend a most cordial welcome to delegates from the Branches, to members of the Society, and to the visitors within our gates.

"On more than one of these pleasant occasions it has been my duty and my privilege to make clear the point of reality in the year's experience as a society. In some years we have needed to be encouraged; to be reminded that valor belongs to the best part of our natures. In years of prosperity there has been a warning not to let prosperity carry us away, to look out for storms in fine weather.

"The truth of the Parable of the Sower is significant in the life of The Theosophical Society. During the period from 1875 to 1899 the seed was widely sown: and while some fell in thorny places, and some in shallow soil, it often seemed as if that sowing were about to prosper in the widest way. Today there remains what fell in good ground—'first the blade, then the leaf, then the full corn in the ear.'

"It takes a long time to ripen a Theosophical harvest. Because the areas of those earlier years seem wider than the areas of today let us not be misled into thinking that this is necessarily the time for another broadcast sowing. Let us realize well that this is the time for filling in the ears.

"Do not impatiently expect area increase! Be careful to weed, to irrigate. Let it be our present care to provide material for filling out the grain in the ear."

Report of the Committee on Credentials

The report of the Committee on Credentials showed that 23 Branches were represented by delegates in person or by proxy, entitled to cast 152 votes in the Convention as the accredited representatives of 553 members of the Society.

Prof. Mitchell reported that the credentials submitted, were, in the judgment of the Committee, authentic; that there were no contested seats in the Convention; and that the Committee having finished its labors would like to be discharged.

By motion of Mr. G. V. S. Michaelis, the Committee was discharged with thanks for their report on the following Branches whose representatives constituted the Convention:

Aurora, Oakland, California.
Blavatsky, Washington, D. C.
Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio.
Dayton, Dayton, Ohio.
H. P. B., Toledo, Ohio.
Hope, Providence, Rhode Island.
Indianapolis, Indianapolis, Indiana.
Middletown, Middletown, Ohio.
New York, New York, N. Y.
Pacific, Los Angeles, California.
Providence, Providence, R. I.
Queen City, Seattle, Washington.
Stockton, Stockton, California.
Syracuse, Syracuse, New York.
Virya, Denver, Colorado.
Alta Gracia de Orituco, Alta Gracia de Orituco, Venezuela.
Aurvanga, Aker, Norway.
Aussig, Aussig-Obersedlitz, Austria.
Berlin, Berlin, Germany.
Dresden, Dresden, Germany.
Flensburg, Flensburg, Germany.
Krishna, South Shields, England.
Munich, Munich, Germany.
Neusalz, Neusalz, Germany.
Nuevo Ciclo, Caracas, Venezuela.
Swedish, Arvika, Sweden.
Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela.

Permanent Organization

Mr. C. A. Griscom, rising to place a nomination for permanent Chairman before the Convention, said that it was a practice of many years standing in the Society to make the President of the Branch which entertained the Convention its permanent Chairman, it gave him great pleasure therefore to nominate Prof. Henry Bedinger Mitchell, President of the New York Branch.

This nomination being seconded by the Rev. Dr. C. C. Clark, and by several other delegates, Prof. Mitchell was elected, and taking the chair expressed the very genuine satisfaction which the New York Branch felt in again having the privilege of acting as host to the Convention. This, he said, should not be passed over as merely a formula with which to "welcome the coming, speed the parting guests."

"It is an easy hospitality which makes welcome to the best one has. As members of The Theosophical Society we are all eager to do more—we wish to share with each other the best that we are: more than that, we must surely wish to share whatever in the past year's experience has served to renew our aspiration, to enkindle the fire of obedience in our hearts, to make dynamic in us the will to serve and not to count the cost."

Mr. E. T. Hargrove made motion that the temporary Secretary be made Secretary of the Convention. This motion being seconded and carried, the Chairman announced that it was in order to elect three standing Committees, one on Nominations, one on Resolutions, and one on Letters of Greeting.

Upon motion of Mr. Charles Johnston, duly seconded, the Convention voted that these Committees be appointed by the Chair, and the Chairman made the following appointments, requesting that the Committees report at the afternoon session.

Committee on Nominations:

Mr. C. A. Griscom,
Mr. G. V. S. Michaelis,
Mrs. Marion F. Gitt,
Mr. Charles M. Saxe.

Committee on Resolutions:

Mr. E. T. Hargrove, Miss Margaret Hohnstedt,
Mr. Charles H. Dower, Mrs. R. F. Helle.

Committee on Letters of Greeting:

Mr. Charles Johnston, Rev. Dr. C. C. Clark, as Secy.,
Dr. George Woolsey.

The Chairman, in asking for the reports of the officers of the Society, called on Mr. Charles Johnston to speak in behalf of the Executive Committee.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

"Mr. Chairman, Fellow-members, and Visitors: The details of the work of your Committee, as reflected in the life of the Society for the past year, will be given in the report of the Secretary T. S. One or two interesting points have arisen—questions of principle—and the action of the Executive Committee in these matters is, as always, subject to approval. During the year two groups of members in two Branches of the Society have held different views, have believed in widely different plans for carrying forward the work which was near to their hearts. Two courses were open: (1) either one group in the Branch might override the wishes of the other group, which would be most undesirable, or an attempt might be made to try alternately one plan and then the other, which would be an admirable experiment. But if it were not found practicable in any way to amalgamate the two groups, then (2) the second course would manifestly suggest itself, that is to form these two groups into two separate Branches of The Theosophical Society. This seemed to your Committee the right and proper course in the case of both the Branches in question; and it does not reflect in any way upon the members forming the different groups. The Theosophical Society stands for complete freedom. Under the letter of the law the three members in one of those groups need not admit anyone else to membership in their new Branch. The Theosophical Society must admit members, but the Branch need not. It might not only be lawful but it might possibly be valuable to carry out a plan of campaign and try it thoroughly before admitting additional members. This would not reflect in any way on members of the Society who were not invited to join the Branch.

"Such a condition arose in South America. A group of members believed that they had a valuable plan to carry out, and asked for a Branch Charter. In asking for this Charter they wished to use as the name of the Branch the name of the capital city of the state in which the Branch was located. But the Executive Committee requested them to select a new name as there was already a Branch of some years' standing in that city which, though it did not bear the name of the city, had long been identified there with the work of The Theosophical Society. The principle is clear. Suppose, for instance, that three members of the Society in New York City had a plan which they believed valuable and were anxious to carry it out. They would be quite within their rights in asking for a Charter. But if they also asked for the name "New York Branch," it would become the duty of the Executive Committee to point out that there has been a Branch in New York City for many years and that a new Branch should bear a distinguishing name. That very situation is now pending in South America; and I lay it before the Convention as the only one that has arisen during the year that involves constitutional law. Given a thousand members who wished to form themselves into three hundred and thirty-three separate Branches, I should be prepared to issue Charters to them."

Mr. Hargrove: "It is customary, I believe, to move a vote of thanks to the Executive Committee; and although a member of that Committee I have no hesitancy in making the motion since the work of the Committee has been done

by its chairman. The truth of the matter is that most of the questions which come before the Committee are very simple, although often entailing a large amount of work and correspondence. If serious questions arose the Chairman would undoubtedly have consulted with the rest of the Committee, but this year it would have been a horrible waste of time. I have not heard before about this matter of the new Branches, but it commends itself to me as the only logical solution, and a very simple one. I do not know for how many years Mr. Johnston has occupied his present position at the head of the Executive Committee, and I am very sure that none of us know how much gratitude we really owe him. The position is a difficult one; whatever he does is sure to displease somebody; and for this reason the more I wish to move that the most cordial thanks of the Society be accorded to him for his arduous and constant labours in our behalf."

Four delegates claimed the privilege of seconding this motion which was unanimously carried, as was also the motion to accept and approve the report.

The Chairman then called for the Report of the Secretary T. S. Mrs. Gregg responded as follows:

Report of the Secretary for the Year Ending April 25, 1914

New Branches and Members

The Secretary begs to report that during the past year diplomas have been issued to 98 new members. Germany leads with 37. Then comes the United States, 29; South America, 16; England, 11; Sweden, 3; Norway, 2; Austria, 1.

During the same time, one Branch has given up its charter, and in all the other Branches the loss in membership has been only 9; by resignation, 5; by death, 4. Among the four who have passed on was a devoted member whose husband has never been a member of the Society, yet it was his desire to mark in some way his wife's abiding interest in the work. So he offered to pay her membership dues, annually, and to keep up her customary donations—so that her name might be kept on the rolls of the Society. A similar feeling has prompted a son, also not a member of the Society, to continue, year after year, the payment of dues for his deceased father. Surely these cases speak eloquently of the quality of the life lived by these two members.

Since the last Convention, Charters have been issued to 2 new Branches:

Rama Nuevo Ciclo, Caracas, Venezuela.
Hope Branch, Providence, Rhode Island.

Correspondence

No phase of the varied work that falls to the Secretary's Office seems to the Secretary so important as the opportunities that the correspondence brings. Letters from places where there is no local center, and letters from new members or students are more eagerly welcomed than the writers of them could imagine. Often the Secretary has to restrain the expression of joy that such letters call out—lest these new correspondents should mistake that joy over a possible new recruit in the service of the Masters for satisfaction over the addition of one more name to the rolls of the Society. The individual needs of each, as the correspondence may reveal them, are constantly remembered; and a chance to send an unexpected bit of help is hailed with delight.

And this is not only true of new members, for there are the dear comrades of many years, whose faces may not be known but whose hearts are. The least request from them is joyfully received; and the word of cheer that they add to a book order, or a routine letter, is like a bit of a visit from an old friend.

Some of our members have the happy custom of making connections with the local Branches in the places they visit. If their travels take them to places where there is no Branch, they ask the Secretary whether there are members-

at-large to be visited. It is a special satisfaction to be able, thus, to put them in touch with members who are working alone, and to whom the coming of a fellow member is a real event; and there is always the hope that through this reinforcement a new Branch may spring into life.

Then the mail brings also requests for guidance in studies, or the frank statement of a personal problem on which light is desired, or, perhaps, the story of a friend whom the writer cannot reach personally but hopes to help through the Society. Every year of experience in this work leaves a deeper impression of the breadth of opportunity that inevitably comes within the sphere of this office, which only time and strength can limit.

Mention should also be made of correspondence with the foreign Branches of the Society. They are so uniformly responsive in replying to all inquiries sent them, so punctilious about complying fully with every request, so eager for any new literature, any suggestions, any opening. By their attitude and fraternal spirit they bridge the space between them and the Secretary's Office, and seem a very near and vital part of the work in which we are united.

The Book and Magazine Department

The number of orders received in this Department has steadily increased during the past year. Our own members appear to be giving more time to the study of our literature; and there are many non-members who are coming to find their needs met by the books we offer. The chief demand is for the books listed in the Quarterly, reviewed in its columns, or referred to in its articles. It is significant that among these the devotional books are most generally sought. For Mr. Johnston's annotated translations of the *Bhagavad Gita* and Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* there are orders from all parts of the world. For each of the books published by the Society there is also widespread demand. They are even sold in wholesale quantities to various other organizations.

It is well understood that the Secretary's Office stands ready to secure any and all other books that may be desired. The order will be filled promptly if it contains the complete title of the book, with name of author and publisher. Frequently it has been possible to supply the desired book when none of these essential facts was correctly given, but the unravelling of such puzzles takes time; so the fullest possible information is appreciated.

Requests for complete bound volumes of the earlier magazines, particularly the *Path,* are still coming in; and it will now be impossible to fill them without the co-operation of members who have files on which they would be willing to allow us to draw. Will not members who have unbound sets of the *Path,* or who know of any in existence, communicate with the Secretary, stating just what numbers they could spare? To the younger members of the Society, who did not have the privilege of sharing in the life and work of those early days, the *Path* represents a means of coming into touch with that life; and so it is always a pleasure to be able to respond to requests from such members for sets of that magazine.

"The Theosophical Quarterly"

It would be quite impossible to give any adequate expression to the estimates of the Quarterly that are constantly received; and yet it is only fair to the many to whom it is so precious that their feeling should be represented. When reading the letters, full of heart-felt gratitude, which often accompany a re-subscription, there comes into mind that rule laid down by one of the Masters—"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in Heaven." To many, the Quarterly represents the only light they have yet found; they do not hesitate to say that they live on it and by it. But most significant of all, perhaps, is the fact that the gratitude for

all this help is first directed, as editor and contributors earnestly desire, to the Society itself, in recognition of its mission, of its place in the world.

Constant readers of the QUARTERLY will not be surprised at the statement that many of its articles have proved permanent additions to the literature of religious philosophy. Much of the precious little volume called *Fragments* first appeared in the QUARTERLY; and it is now widely used as a book of devotion. Mr. Johnston's translation of the *Bhagavad Gita,* which is regarded by some scholars as the best translation of this great classic ever made, was put into book form soon after its publication in the QUARTERLY; and yet the first edition is already exhausted, and the second, we are pleased to announce, is in course of preparation. Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras,* annotated like the *Gita,* in Mr. Johnston's illuminating and inspiring manner, is another QUARTERLY product, and so generally appreciated that another edition is now projected. Professor Mitchell's *Talks on Religion* found its first audience in the QUARTERLY, and the interest aroused led to its publication in book form. His admirable brochures, *Meditation* and *Theosophy and the Theosophical Society,* which also originated with the QUARTERLY, have been invaluable aids in our work; the former is used as a text-book in many study classes, and the latter is constantly making friends for the Society.

Again, it is through the QUARTERLY that the Secretary most frequently hears from people who are strangers to Theosophy. And it may be a surprise to some to know that in the majority of such cases the writer found the QUARTERLY in some library, has been reading it, and wants further information about the Society. A few libraries are regular subscribers to the QUARTERLY; to others it is sent by certain Branches and individuals; to others it is sent at the expense of the Society. But the libraries offer a wide field for further work; there are thousands of them in which the QUARTERLY is not to be found. Here is a line of work in which every member and every Branch could share. Has the QUARTERLY been put into the libraries in the cities and towns near you? If not, take a sample copy to the librarian, get a subscription if possible, or arrange to have the magazine properly displayed with other magazines if furnished to the library. In case the neighboring field is covered, there are many libraries known to the Secretary, for which Branches or individuals might place subscriptions. Will not each Branch and each member-at-large undertake to do something toward putting the QUARTERLY into the libraries of the country? It will be a help, in advance, to know that, with a few unimportant exceptions, the mazagine is gladly received by librarians. Many of them show their appreciation of its value by writing for duplicate copies, and by asking whether it is to be furnished them for another year.

The Secretary would be happy to respond to calls for sample copies of the magazine to be used in that way, sending the samples free of charge. Free samples would also be sent, on the request of members, to friends whom they would like to interest in the Society, by persuading them to become subscribers to the magazine. And what better birthday gift for a friend who is trying to solve the riddle of life than a subscription to the QUARTERLY?

Interest in the QUARTERLY is by no means limited to this country. Frequently members in foreign Branches write that they are learning English so that they may be able to read it. This desire is no less manifest since the publication of the admirable magazines that are issued by our brothers in Germany and South America—*Dharma,* published by the Branch in Venezuela; and the *Theosophiches Leben,* published in Berlin by the United German Branches. Both magazines add to their original articles translations of articles from the QUARTERLY; and it is interesting to see which of the many treasures contained in its 11 volumes are chosen by the editors of those magazines as the medium for the introduction of the theosophic life and spirit to their countrymen.

It is again necessary to call the attention of members to the importance of sending the Secretary prompt notification of any change of address, in order that

the QUARTERLY and other of the Society's papers may reach them safely. Carelessness or forgetfulness in this matter always greatly increases the work of the Secretary and often makes it impossible to communicate with the member in question.

A PERSONAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

There is much in my heart to say about the many and constant kindnesses that have been shown to me, personally, by members near and far; but this is hardly the place for such acknowledgments. I must, however, ask the privilege of saying a few words here about what has so generously been done to further the work of the Secretary's Office.

First, to the officers of the Society my constant thanks are due and are gladly here recorded. Without their fraternal coöperation, counsel and assistance the work could not be carried on; and they never fail to give, in abundant and joyous measure, all that is asked of them. Again, and this is for the third time, my own thanks and those of the Society, are due to Mrs. M. T. Gordon for the valuable work that she has done in the Secretary's Office. This year, as new needs arose, demanding the devotion of much extra time to the work, Mrs. Gordon was always ready to meet the emergency, and so made it possible to carry on work that must otherwise have suffered. I am glad to say that Miss Perkins was later detailed to assist me with the work. Mrs. Helle has, as for several years past, addressed the envelopes for a large section of the QUARTERLY subscription list; and with the increase in the lists Miss Hascall has also shared in this very necessary task; and for other special help I am also indebted to Miss Peters.

It is due to such voluntary service that our Society is so strong, and it assures us of the continuance of the work as long as devoted hearts can be found.

Now, my friends, let us be encouraged by the results of our work in the past, and as we go on in life's ways let us try to help those around us, let us try to love all. Then we may be sure we are following the teaching of the Master.

Respectfully submitted,

(Signed) ADA GREGG,

Secretary T. S.

The Chairman: "You have heard the Secretary's Report, covering the wide field of the activities of the Secretary's Office, what is your pleasure as regards this report."

Mr. Griscom: "It is very difficult to voice what we feel for Mrs. Gregg and for the work which she has so faithfully performed in the interests of the Society. This year her duties have been peculiarly difficult. She has been ill for ten months out of the twelve since last Convention. In spite of her physical condition she has gone steadily on with her work, nothing has been neglected; the letters have been written, the records are up to date, the book orders have been promptly filled, and the QUARTERLY has been sent out on time. This work she herself has carried forward, and to her our gratitude is due, although we would not fail to join with her in expressing thanks to those who have helped her—to Mrs. Gordon, Mrs. Helle, Miss Peters and Miss Perkins. This year there is occasion not only for the thanks which we usually express to Mrs. Gregg but also for a special recognition. It is not a question of the number of letters written but rather of the gentle sympathy and the spirit of affection which goes into them, and which has done so much to make the work of the Secretary's Office of lasting value. In making this motion, as a member of the Society, I also wish to include an expression of my personal debt of gratitude to Mrs. Gregg. I believe that it will give us all pleasure to accept the report, and to express our deep appreciation by a rising vote of thanks."

This motion being cordially seconded, it was unanimously approved.

Mr. Johnston being called to take the chair, Professor Mitchell presented the Report of the Treasurer T. S.

Report of the Treasurer

"We began the year with a balance of $1,000.56. This was a very large amount to carry over, but in part this was due to unpaid printing bills for the Quarterly. The receipts for the year amounted to $1,818.27; the disbursements for the year were $2,392.20, which, with the balance from the previous year, leaves a general balance, all bills being paid, of $426.62, which seems to me very creditable, especially as compared with some years when it was necessary to report a deficit and to make an appeal for special contributions. The details of the report are as follows:

Report of the Treasurer of The Theosophical Society for the Year from April 20, 1913, to April 20, 1914

Receipts		*Disbursements.*	
Dues	$843.69	Secretary's Office	$240.63
Quarterly	429.80	Special Pub. Account	300.00
Contribution	544.77	Discretionary Exp. Account.	350.00
	$1,818.26	Printing 5 issues of the Quarterly	1,501.57
Bal. April 20, 1913	1,000.56		$2,392.20
	$2,818.82	General Bal. April 20, 1914	426.62
			$2,818.82

(Signed) H. B. Mitchell,
Treasurer T. S.

April 24, 1914.

"In conclusion, let me express appreciation for the generous donations which the increasing demands of the work have made most timely. I also wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr. and Miss Perkins in the details of the Treasurer's office."

Mr. Johnston, as instructed by vote of the Convention, tendered to the Treasurer its most cordial thanks and congratulations upon the success of the year as reported.

Resuming the chair, Professor Mitchell announced the usual recess between sessions, suggesting that the Committees on Nominations, Resolutions, and Letters of Greeting should confer and be ready to report when the Convention reassembled at half-past two o'clock. In the meantime there would be opportunities for the renewing of old acquaintances and for the forming of new friendships. Visiting delegates were invited to lunch with the members of the New York Branch, at the Hotel Brevoort.

Upon motion by Mr. Acton Griscom, duly seconded, the Convention adjourned until 2.30 P. M.

Afternoon Session.

The Convention was called to order by the Chairman, who asked for the Report of the Committee on Resolutions.

Resolutions

Mr. E. T. Hargrove, as Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions, submitted the following:

Resolved, That Mr. Charles Johnston, as Chairman of the Executive Committee, is hereby requested to reply to the messages of greeting from foreign Branches in the name of and in behalf of this Convention; and to extend to the Conventions of the European Branches our fraternal greetings and hearty good wishes.

Resolved, That this Convention of the Theosophical Society hereby requests and authorizes visits of the officers of the Society to Branches in Europe and America.

Resolved, That a new By-law shall be added to the present By-laws, to read as follows, "No. 39. Assistant Secretaries and Assistant Treasurers may be elected at any Convention or appointed by the Executive Committee between Conventions." By-law 39 then becomes No. 40.

Resolved, That the thanks of the Convention and of the Society be extended and are hereby extended to the New York Branch for the hospitality received.

Resolved, That the greetings of the Convention be extended by cable to the British Branches and to Dr. and Mrs. Keightley, with an expression of regret for their absence.

Each of these resolutions having been separately approved by the unanimous vote of the Convention, Doctor Clark made a motion, which was duly seconded, that the report as a whole be accepted, and that the Committee be discharged with the grateful thanks of the Convention. This motion being carried, the Chairman announced that the election of officers for the ensuing year was in order.

Election of Officers

Mr. C. A. Griscom, Chairman of the Committee on Nominations, reported that it was the duty of the Convention to elect two members of the Executive Committee, to serve for three years from date of election, and that this Committee was unanimous in nominating Colonel T. H. Knoff of Norway, whose term has just expired; and Judge Robert W. McBride of Indianapolis, whose membership in the Society antedates other American members. Mr. Michaelis, seconded by Mr. Saxe, made motion that the Secretary be instructed to cast one ballot for the election of Colonel Knoff and of Judge McBride. By unanimous vote of the Convention this was done.

Mr. Griscom then placed in nomination for the office of Secretary T. S. the name of Mrs. Ada Gregg. The nomination being seconded, Mrs. Gregg was elected by unanimous vote.

For the office of Treasurer, Mr. Griscom brought forward the name of Professor Henry Bedinger Mitchell. Upon motion of Mr. Michaelis, duly seconded, the Convention ordered the Secretary to cast one ballot for the election of Professor Mitchell.

For Assistant Secretary, the Committee nominated Miss Perkins; and for Assistant Treasurer, Mr. Perkins. Both were duly elected; and upon motion of Mr. Russ, the Committee on Nominations were discharged with thanks.

Report on the Theosophical Quarterly

The Chairman then called for a report on the Quarterly from the editor-in-chief, Mr. C. A. Griscom, who said:

"Last year, some of you may remember, when I got up for the tenth time to speak about the Quarterly, I told you that I had exhausted all my own ideas and had asked my son to supply me with some new ones, which he did. This year, finding myself in the same position, I asked him again to furnish me with a few well chosen thoughts, but he declined, saying that I had played a mean trick on him last year. Then I appealed to Mr. Hargrove, who made the cheerful and luminous suggestion: 'You are not going to live forever. Why not tell them what your policy is so that they will be able to carry on the magazine after you are dead?' I think that a great idea!

"From the very beginning we established one standard—to avoid personalities. Those of you who are familiar with other magazines that call themselves Theosophical will know that this was a decided departure. In all the years that the Quarterly has been published it has never yet attacked anyone, and it has not

referred to individuals, has not been controversial, with the single exception of Professor Mitchell's article on "Theosophy and the Theosophical Society," which had to deal with individuals to a certain extent so that the real position of the Society should be on record once and for all; so we could refer people to that and avoid that kind of thing in the future. The article was well done and most successful; we should all feel gratitude to Professor Mitchell for the complete way in which he performed his melancholy duty.

"Save for obituary notices, we never speak of individuals as such. Instead, the magazine is devoted to a personal exposition of the views of the writers on every subject under the sun.

"A second point to be noted is that the Society is not responsible for what is printed in the QUARTERLY, except in the occasional official documents; and that the articles do not even represent the views of the editors. The magazine stands on the Theosophical platform of tolerance; and we occasionally print articles with which we do not agree at all, and there are frequently sentences and paragraphs in many articles with which we do not agree. That is inevitable, natural and proper. This attitude, on the other hand, does not require that space should be given to the propaganda of every fad and ism that may come along, but the pages of the magazine will be found to contain widely different types of articles. We endeavor to make each issue as well balanced as possible; we always want to have the East represented, which is done by Mr. Johnston's contributions and translations from the great scriptures of the East. Recently a series of articles on the religion of China has been started by a very retiring person now sitting over in the corner who would be shocked if I were to mention her name. Christianity is always represented; the teachings of Madam Blavatsky, which are often called Theosophy as a philosophy, are usually represented in one or more articles; and there are always articles on the devotional, practical side which give the reader something to do. We aim to be a sufficiently scholarly, erudite magazine, but our special effort is to emphasize living the life. "Fragments," "On the Screen of Time," and the many separate articles dealing with different points of the inner life and religious experience are the most valuable features we have. I do not think of anything else to say."

Mr. Hargrove: "Why not thank the contributors to the QUARTERLY?"

Mr. Griscom: "Why not let the readers of the QUARTERLY do that? Everyone knows who has ever had occasion to get out a magazine on time how genuine are the thanks that the editor owes. Nearly everyone present has helped. There are, for instance, three excellent articles on "The Eastern Church," by Miss Anne Evans of Denver; but there are so many people to be thanked that I think it a proper thing for the Society to go on record to that effect, and I should like to make that motion."

Mr. Michaelis: "I object. With all due respect for and recognition of the contribution of others, I think we ought to remember that all the constructive work is done by one person. The work of the contributors is all laid out for them, and the labor of integrating and unifying these widely differing contributions is the responsibility of the editor-in-chief alone. Therefore, as an amendment to Mr. Griscom's motion, I should like to add the heartiest appreciation for the editor-in-chief and the Society's most cordial congratulation upon the policy which he inaugurated and has wrought out."

The motion as amended was carried, with the manifest good will of the Convention.

REPORTS OF DELEGATES

The Chairman then called for the reports of Branches that were represented by delegates in person.

Cincinnati Branch

Miss Margaret Hohnstedt read the report of the Cincinnati Branch as forwarded by its Secretary; and, being asked to tell the Convention something further of the work there, said that this year the meetings seemed to be held on a higher plane than ever before. "We have an average attendance of thirty during the season, bad weather and all; two-thirds of the number being visitors. These visitors return, meeting after meeting, and that is not because they are attracted by discussions on psychism, for some of them have expressed surprise at finding the tone of the meetings so thoroughly religious. That is what we have been trying to bring out—the religious aspects of Theosophy.

"We have a *Secret Doctrine* Class of 12 members; there is a class for study of the *Ocean of Theosophy* and we have been using the second volume of *Letters That Have Helped Me*. Mr. Manning conducts the *Secret Doctrine* Class most successfully. The Quarterly, which is in our public library, has many readers, which it seems to me is another evidence of the growing influence of the Theosophical Movement in Cincinnati."

Washington Branch

The Chairman called upon Mrs. Thompson of the Washington Branch, asking her to make an informal report of the life and progress of the work at the national capital. Mrs. Thompson protested that she came to the Convention to listen, not to talk. Whereupon the Chairman asked Mrs. Gitt, the President of the Washington Branch, to present her report.

Mrs. Gitt said that there had been much sickness among the members, and that in the last few years many had been called away from the city, so that the membership showed no increase. There seemed to be no lack of interest, and much devotion to the cause. The vital questions which they used for public discussion were the evolution of man, and such questions of the day as the Mexican problem. The Branch seemed to have experienced three separate stages of growth. During the first stage, that of propaganda, there was much excitement and tremendous enthusiasm; in the second stage, through further development, they began to wonder what the Master would like to have them do; in the third stage, they had become satisfied to let the Master do the work through them. This third stage had not meant the loss of anything, but rather the gain of greater obedience, further aspiration, and resignation to his will. The question most in the minds of members seemed to be—Is anything being done through us as a center?

Middletown Branch

A letter from the Secretary of the Middletown Branch was read, sending heartiest greetings to the Convention, and presenting Mrs. Margaret T. Gordon as delegate to report on the Branch work. Mrs. Gordon gave the following report:

"The Middletown, Ohio, Branch sends to this Convention the heartiest of greetings and to each and every one of you love and good wishes. I am requested also to say, that this love and these good wishes are sent in great, big chunks.

"The Middletown Branch now numbers eight—an increase of one since report of a year ago. While the growth of the Branch in numbers is slow I believe it is sure. The material that is being added is of good quality and strong.

"One of the older members writes:—'The two or three that joined the Branch within the last two years are very earnest and very hardworking members. They are thinkers and above all they are trying to live the life—trying to be theosophists. You know there is quite a difference between a member of the Theosophical Society and a theosophist. All members of the T. S. believe in Universal Brotherhood but do all so live.'

"All the letters that come to me from the Branch are full of enthusiasm for the work—full of expressions of encouragement and of hope for the future of the Branch.

"I have been told of some very interesting meetings held during the winter just passed—that visitors are now always in attendance at the meetings and that often there is a goodly number of these comers. For a long period in the life of this Branch—visitors were an exception not a rule. The few members that gathered together for study seemed like a little family circle and the program for the occasion was carried out in a homelike, friendly and intimate manner.

"I was quite touched by a statement made in a letter I received.

"Just prior to a meeting of the Branch information came that quite a crowd would be in attendance. I inferred they were all or most of them strangers to the members. At any rate, he who was to conduct the meeting was somewhat puzzled as to how he should do it and serve the needs of these visitors. Then the thought came to him to pray for help, so he fell on his knees and prayed, he said, more earnestly than he prayed ever before—prayed for help and guidance. Then the letter says: 'You may imagine the result—a decided success, interest at high tide—many questions asked—crowd lingered until a late hour,' and I was assured that prayer would thereafter precede each meeting. Can I close a report of this Branch without mentioning our blind member? It would not seem complete. With her gentleness, patience and good will toward all she is such a vital part of it. I am sure she is giving much to these meetings, much that serves to hold this little Branch in place."

Hope Branch

Mrs. Irene Regan, Chairman of the new Branch in Providence, when asked to present a report expressed her own pleasure and satisfaction in attending the Convention, and referred to the Secretary of the Branch, Mrs. F. A. Fitts, the making of the report. Mrs. Fitts said:

"There is little which may be said as a formal report from Hope Branch, for our Charter has just been received and there has been no formal meeting: It is our desire to sound one clear note, the note of coöperation. There are so many ways of doing effective work for Theosophy. For the present we want to try one of these ways exclusively; we hope through the use of the Theosophic method to gain a synthesis of the views of each member of our Branch and so come to a broader vision of truth. We hope that your prayers will follow us."

Providence Branch

The Chairman called upon Mrs. Jennie C. Sheldon, President of the Providence Branch, for their annual report. Mrs. Sheldon said:

"There are very few events to report in the life of Providence Branch during the last year. The history of Providence Branch has been very much like the history of the Society. We were troubled when we heard that there was to be another Branch in Providence; we were troubled lest in some way we had not done our full duty. But Mr. Johnston has made it clear that it is all right, and we wish the new Branch most hearty good will and success in their work.

"As one of the other delegates has said here today, we have had much sickness to contend with, and this has made the attendance at our meetings smaller than usual. Many of our members live in the outskirts of the city and the bad weather has kept them at home. Our regular Sunday evening meeting has been maintained, and a spirit of devotion is manifest. The Tuesday evening meeting has been held regularly, and I, for one, feel how great is our indebtedness to the authors of those articles in the *Path, Lucifer,* and *Theosophy* which we have been following at these Tuesday meetings. Their unselfish work lives on after the workers have departed. Our Wednesday afternoon meetings have been most

successful. There are sometimes 14 persons present. We have been studying the *Yoga Sutras,* and we have recognised their inspiration toward spiritual growth; next we take up the *Religion of the Will.* As a result of these meetings, five members have joined our Branch. We also use Mr. Judge's letters on chelaship, and Cavé's writings on discipleship. We are grateful for the many spiritual blessings which have come to us during the year, and we hope that we may be true to the principles of Theosophy as we go forward to do our duty with the strength that is in us."

Syracuse Branch

The Chairman spoke of his pleasure in welcoming Mr. Charles H. Dower, for many years a member of the Society and of the Syracuse Branch. Mr. Dower said:

"The Syracuse Branch is one of the old Branches of the Society. In Mr. Judge's time it was a very strong center; since then we have had many ups and downs. During the years death has taken many of our members from us, and a large number have moved away to other cities, and I hope to other Branches of the Society; but the work has been carried on. When Mr. Judge used to visit us he would sometimes go out to the Indian Reservation and talk to the Indians who lived there; and this work we have carried on. One thing we have learned—it is not difficult to interest people in Theosophy, if one goes about it in the right way; people are always drawing general conclusions from the events of everyday life, and if one is willing to approach Theosophy from that angle people are ready to listen. If we are ready to listen to the truth of another we shall find him ready to hear the truth as it seems to us. No matter how few members may be present at any meeting, we find the Masters willing to second our efforts in their cause."

New York Branch

Mr. E. T. Hargrove, Chairman of the New York Branch, was asked to report upon its activities, and spoke as follows:

"Mr. Chairman, delegates of the Convention, and fellow-members: It is part and parcel of the philosophy of our Branch that one member cannot present its report. It is part of our aim to draw out the contribution of the individual members. By coöperation, by real Brotherhood, it is possible so to combine individual gifts and the light that filters through the individual mind as to get a fair representation of the truth. So I hope that others also will speak for the Branch. I will try to contribute my quota.

"As a group we do not call ourselves Theosophists because that would be to claim too much. We regard Theosophy as the ideal toward which we work but which must ever recede as we approach it—we are members of the Theosophical Society, and are striving to become Theosophists. It was well said that we reach a point at last at which we realize that of ourselves we can do nothing; we see that the Universal must accomplish things through us by means of achieving things in us and on us. The Branch as a whole has seriously taken to heart its responsibility under that head. We have discovered, as a Branch, that it is absolutely useless to *talk* about Theosophy, to propagate intellectual ideas or formulas. The acceptance of a creed, whether labelled theosophical or anything else, does not even constitute belief. No man believes in something unless he lives it; belief only exists if it affects his conduct and moves his will: that is if he *does* something about it. A man may say that he believes in human brotherhood; if he does not act it, live it, think it, he does not believe it—a man lives that which he believes. If a man calls himself a Christian and is a thief by profession, he is not a Christian, he is a thief. It is horribly simple. We can only

give what we are. If we are talking about brotherhood, the first and the last step for us is to be and to become what we are talking about.

"Years ago, at the beginning of the movement, much fundamental work had to be done by Madame Blavatsky and by Mr. Judge; during his lifetime very few members had outgrown the kindergarten stage. It was given to Mr. Judge to find few who could understand him. He was always striving to give the spiritual reality; he wanted to give knowledge first hand and not out of books. He knew, if anyone ever did know, that knowledge is only obtainable by turning the will from the unreal to the real. But during his lifetime, I do not think there were more than three or four people in the Society who began to understand Mr. Judge or what he was working for.

"Little by little the Society grew up. The Almighty used his fan and winnowed out those who on account of psychic or intellectual barriers were incapable of seeing what William Q. Judge really was teaching. As a Society we have grown to a point at which we are really beginning to understand something of Theosophy.

"The New York Branch flatters itself that it, in any case, is beginning to show signs of adolescence, since it is interested in the things that concern the will. In our Branch there has been a spontaneous tendency to discuss questions of discipleship, or what might be called the religious aspect of Theosophy; and Miss Hohnstedt has spoken of this as being true in the Cincinnati Branch also. This does not mean that we are losing interest in other things, but that we are learning to use them for the purpose of discipleship. We can never serve the divine, unless we become like that which we would serve; the whole problem could be expressed in terms of likeness.

"We can sympathize with Mrs. Sheldon's expression of good will for the new Branch in Providence; the three members who hope by coöperation to express their own ideal. We must be very careful that we do not get hurt feelings because someone else does not agree with us; that would show that we did not understand Theosophy—Where two or three are gathered in the name of an ideal that ideal will grow up in the midst of them.

"On my own behalf and that of the Branch, I wish to say that we look forward with real pleasure to these Conventions; I do not know so glad a time in the history of the Branch as when we can welcome a Convention of the Society. I do not know any atmosphere that is so cordial and homelike as the atmosphere of a Theosophical Convention. If you had been away from it for a number of years and then came back to it, you would realize this.

"This is the fourth year that the New York Branch has been favored by being the host of the Convention. The Branch that entertains the Society has to be very firmly planted on its feet. The Branch that entertains the Convention has occasion to tremble. The fact is that if we look back over the past we shall see that more than one Branch has nearly been shaken off its feet just because the Convention has been held in its midst. Because so many members of the New York Branch are case hardened and have learned by long experience to balance themselves when the ship rocks under them, holding onto the rigging or anything else in sight, it is perhaps wiser and safer to have Conventions held here.

"The gladness created by your presence is very great and very deep. Those in this room who represent the survivors of the Theosophical Movement may be war-worn, but we are not weary, thank Heaven! It may be that we have begun to learn the lesson of eternal youth. Again and again I would speak of the pleasure, the immense delight, the lightness of heart that exists in such a meeting, among members of a Society working together for a common aim, backed as the Society is backed by the greatest spiritual force in the universe—the thin edge of a wedge, driven home, further and further into the most material civilization

that the world has ever seen. The edge is not even worn or blunted but instead grows more alive. This may sound figurative, but I do not believe it to be so. The longer we live the better we are able to appreciate what the Society stands for in the real world; and I cannot imagine a greater honor than to be a member.

"At no time in the past have I, for one, known such open and manifest expression of the power back of us as in the last few years. The future is not in our hands, the present is. If we do our best, if we are true to our ideals, then the future will be taken care of for us."

The Chairman then called upon the members-at-large. Dr. Woolsey of Fonda, New York, expressed his pleasure at being able to attend the Convention, as it brought members who live where there is no Branch so much closer to the real life of the movement as a whole. Dr. Woolsey said that he would much prefer to listen to others than to speak himself.

Mr. Saxe, of Niagara Falls, said that he felt as Doctor Woolsey did, and that he would much prefer to listen, but lest a member-at-large might seem to appear ungrateful for all that the Convention meant he would tell a story. "Once upon a time I had an old 'cello which seemed well enough in its way but failed to give a good clear tone. I looked it all over and thought I discovered a little crack in the top which might be making the trouble; so I took it to a competent 'cello maker and left it to have the little crack glued up. But the 'cello maker knew far better than I. He found something wrong with the inside of the instrument, fixed that, paid no attention to the little crack, and the 'cello responded as never before.

"I came to the Convention knowing that I was lonely, as there is no Branch where I live and I seldom have opportunity to talk with members of the Society. I knew that if I came to the Convention this spot would be all made right, and instead I have received help where I did not know that I needed it at all."

Letters of Greeting

Responding to the Chairman's call for a report from the Committee on Letters of Greeting, Mr. Johnston said that Doctor Clark and Doctor Woolsey agreed that it was not possible to read to the Convention all of the letters of greeting which had been received. He would therefore read extracts, hoping that the editor of the Quarterly could find space for the full text of the letters in the July issue. Upon receiving the assurance of the Committee that the cablegrams and letters of greeting would receive proper acknowledgement, the Committee was discharged, with the thanks of the Convention.

Address of Professor Mitchell

Mr. Johnston was asked to take the chair so that Professor Mitchell might respond to the request of Mr. Hargrove that he, as President of the New York Branch, should give some further account of its activities.

"One of my brother professors, who holds the chair of psychology at Columbia University, tells me that I am all wrong in my endeavor to mark my own students, that if I wish an illuminating report on their progress I should get them to make the report and to determine what their own marks should be. Now the Chairman of the New York Branch suggests that if I see no need of further report on the Branch work I might at least report on myself, on my behavior. That I decline to do! Among its many functions that of the confessor does not belong to the Theosophical Society.

"But I am glad to make my contribution to a report of the New York Branch, for it is true, I believe, that no one member can report upon any true Theosophical work. Any work which is undertaken to be an expression of the fundamental principles of the Theosophical Society must of necessity find its complete-

ness only as the collective expression of a group of members; that is the principle on which we have proceeded throughout the Winter.

"Our proceedings could be described in many ways. The meetings are interesting and real to me but I never know whether they will be interesting to any given individual. To me there is something fairly exciting about our meetings: there is the open door, and we do not know who will come in, what elements will be brought into this collection of truth which it will be our effort to synthesize; we do not at all know what turn things will take, what facet of the truth will be brought out. I feel confident that one who comes to our meetings and earnestly tries to fit the pieces together, to get the life and the spiritual significance of it all will find the meetings exciting as well as profitable, for if one is going to find the synthesis of dissimilar views, it must be sought in a higher realm, the discussion must be lifted to another plane.

"The very fundamental Theosophical method of tolerance, of synthesis, of the open door, in an all inclusive sense,—the method of Catholicity, which accepts all that comes as having some gift to offer and welds all together,—is a method that drives you inward, beyond and below the mere surface of things to their essence and reality.

"Here is another side of that most significant phase of the work of the New York Branch; its insistence on reality. I believe that we become real as we deal with real things, searching in ourselves and in others for the reality. Our Society is founded on the belief that intellectual dogma and mental views are not real, are but forms or approximate expressions of the Real; if we are going to deal with reality we have to get beneath them. It does us no good to know all *about* Theosophy, or all the facts about discipleship. To know just how one ought to attain and then not to act should not content us; that descriptive kind of knowledge does us no good, we want first hand knowledge. In Theosophy it is the attitude, the method, the spirit, the life; those are the chief expressions of our work. The New York Branch meetings are interesting, vital, and real; and I believe them to be typical of what the Society stands for. I think they are generally helpful. I know they always help me."

The Chairman announced that while the business before the Convention had been completed there would be an informal meeting, a reception, at half-past eight o'clock in the evening, when there would be opportunity for exchange of views and for a freer expression of that tie of brotherhood in which we find so much of the real joy and happiness of our lives.

He also announced a public lecture by Mr. Charles Johnston at Hotel St. Denis at a half after three o'clock on Sunday afternoon, to which the delegates were invited to bring their friends; the subject of the lecture being "Modern Problems and the Theosophic Life."

Mr. Michaelis asked the privilege of voicing the gratitude of the delegates for the great opportunities of this Convention; he felt that the Convention must represent highwater mark in the experience of the Society and he hoped that it might prove a long step upward from which the Society would never permit itself to recede.

Upon motion by Mr. Johnston, the Convention expressed its appreciation for the services of its Chairman and Secretary by a rising vote of thanks.

By motion of Mr. Hargrove, seconded by Mr. Johnston, the Convention adjourned without day.

KARL D. PERKINS,
Secretary of Convention.

Letters of Greeting

Many letters of greeting were received by the Convention, from all parts of the world, and the customary and always welcome cable from Dr. Keightley in London, on behalf of the British members.

From Sweden, Mr. H. Julin writes that "if you hear a soft whisper in the room where you are assembled, please take it as a warm greeting from far off friends. If you hear it not, it yet will be there, bearing the thanks which we all feel for all that comes to us from America during all these years; and carrying our wishes for the future. We will endeavor to keep the day of the Convention as a Holy Day. We will meet and send our thoughts to the country which contains the Heart of the movement."

From Norway, Colonel T. H. Knoff sent the following:

I have been charged by the two Norwegian Branches to send a message to the Annual Convention of the T. S., which is now to be held at New York, April 25th this year.

We all regret very much to be so far away, that none of us can attend at the Convention and profit by coming in direct touch with so many strong and devoted Co-Workers. This is our Karma, and we have to bear it. Meanwhile, we know that we are not forgotten, and that we shall partake in the power of harmony and devotion manifested at the Convention.

Rejoicing in this thought, the Karma Branch, Kristiania, and the Aurvanga Branch, Aker, are sending their brotherly greetings, wishing much success for the deliberations of the Convention.

Yours fraternally,
T. H. Knoff.

On behalf of the members in Venezuela, Mr. J. J. Benzo wrote:

The members of the "Rama Venezuela" have entrusted me with the charge of sending to the Convention of the Theosophical Society our cordial greeting. Notwithstanding our ardent desire, we have been unable to nominate one of our companions from here to represent us directly in the greater labors of the Society; but there will not be lacking the presence of our spirit among those who receive the blessing of the Masters and who sustain and live the principle of universal brotherhood.

The most important event of this year has been the re-appearance of the review *Dharma,* which has permitted us, among other things, to make known to the South American public the thought and life of the Society through the medium of its writers. One of its works of most excellent merit translated, because of its actual interest, has been "The Theosophical Society and Theosophy," by Prof. H. B. Mitchell, who has depicted with absolute clearness the historic process of the Society founded and sustained by H. P. B. and W. Q. J., at the same time as he demonstrates its eminently impersonal existence. This work has been, doubtless, a special benefit to the readers of our movement; because it throws light over many points that had been subjects of discussion and diverse comment, even among the very members of the Society.

Our review circulates sufficiently over all Spanish-America and has met with a good reception. Its pages bear admirable articles, selected from the notable review The Theosophical Quarterly, and in this way is instrumental in giving in Spanish the literary and philosophical labors of our North American brothers; it would appear to fulfil the mission of joining the thought of one-half of America to the thought of the other half as a detail of the noble design of the Masters of uniting the world through life and spirit.

The "Rama Venezuela" most sincerely desires a happy issue for the works of the Convention.

Fraternally,
Juan J. Benzo.

Mr. Paul Raatz, whose presence at the Convention last year was so much enjoyed, had to content himself and us this year with written greetings:

To the members of the T. S. in Convention assembled:

DEAR COMRADES:

Another year of work for mankind as members of the Theosophical Society has passed, and we have met together to draw up an account of our activity during the past year.

It is my privilege to tender to you the hearty greetings of all the Branches in the "Union of German Branches of the T. S." A year ago I had the pleasure and good fortune of being present personally at the Convention, of taking part in the proceedings and what was of most importance, of personally sensing the *Spirit,* which prevailed. I experienced this as a great blessing, for although the universal Spirit is everywhere, it is however true, that this Spirit can manifest itself better on certain occasions and at certain places. Our Convention is such an occasion. Not only personalities take part in it, but also the spiritual selves of all members of our T. S. and above all our Elder Brothers, the Masters, who stand and work behind the visible world, for the progress of mankind, as we are told in *Light on the Path.* I believe, that the force of the Masters manifests itself more at our Convention than at any other time.

But I must not forget that this is a Convention of the "T. S.," of a Society which requires no beliefs and no dogmas, and therefore not even a belief in the Masters. There may be members here who do not believe in them, and these members have a right to their place in our midst. The T. S. in its universality is open to all, who believe in humanity. May we members also succeed in identifying ourselves with this spirit, so that a consciousness of this universality and immortality may be aroused in us. Our Convention gives us a good opportunity of strengthening our consciousness in this direction.

I have an excellent report to make of our movement in Germany. We are making progress, but this shows itself less in an increase of members than in the earnestness to *live,* to practise what has been recognized as true. This is to be ascribed in a great degree to the inspiring articles in the QUARTERLY and the translations of these in our magazine *Theosophisches Leben.* This has been unusually successful since we transformed it to a quarterly. The list of readers has increased and these send us many a word of praise. Fifteen universities in Germany have asked to have the magazine sent regularly to them, and in case a number is delayed or lost, immediately we receive notice, begging to have it re-sent. This success in the most educated classes in Germany is due solely to the excellent articles in the QUARTERLY, which are translated and form the greater part of the contents of our magazine. I take this opportunity of once more thanking the editors for giving us the right of translation. May these articles bear much fruit in the coming years.

Greeting you once more in the name of all our German members,—I remain with best wishes for a successful Convention.

Yours sincerely,
PAUL RAATZ,
Secretary of the "Union of German Branches of the T. S."

The Convention was also privileged to receive reports and letters of greeting from many Branches both in our country and abroad, which lack of space prevents our printing. The "Nuevo Ciclo" Branch of Caracas, Venezuela, sends a most interesting report of its formation and of the work it has in prospect, signed by its Vice-President, Dr. Lopez-Fontaines.

Mr. M. de Cueva sends greetings and report from the Altagracia de Orituco Branch, also of Venezuela, while from Germany we have the pleasure in acknowl-

edging letters, from Aussig, so complete and interesting that it is a great pity it cannot be printed in full, from Flensburg, from Munich, and from Dresden. This latter Branch reports most gratifying activities and the possession of a library of 550 volumes for the use of members.

The Aurvanga Branch of Norway reports 29 public meetings, at which 319 visitors were present, and at 22 of which lectures were given mostly by Mr. Alme, whose specialty is Norse Mythology.

Mrs. Graves reports for the Norfolk Branch of England.

In this country, in addition to the verbal reports and greetings of the delegates, we received written communications from Branches in Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Seattle, Oakland, Stockton, and Los Angeles, all full of good cheer and warm wishes, and permeated by a striking spirit of optimism and hope for the future.

NOTICE

A new edition of Mr. Charles Johnston's translation of the *Bhagavad Gita,* with his illuminating and valuable commentary, is in the press and will be ready the first of October. It will be printed in convenient size for the pocket, in two styles of binding; red cloth, for $1.00, and red, limp leather for $1.50. The limp leather edition is printed on the best imported India paper, and will be less than a quarter of an inch thick; an ideal travelling companion. The first 100 copies of this leather edition will bear the signature of the translator on the title page. Orders for this autographed edition may be placed at once; they will be filled in the order in which they are received, until the edition is exhausted. Orders should be sent to "The Quarterly Book Department," 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, New York.

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS.

ABRIDGMENT OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE, (Hillard)	$2.16
A PRIMER OF THEOSOPHY, by Katherine Hillard	.10
BHAGAVAD GITA, translated by Charles Johnston, with Commentary, cloth, $1.00; limp leather	1.15
BHAGAVAD GITA, Edited by W. Q. Judge, leather	.75
CABINET SIZE PHOTO, H. P. BLAVATSKY or W. Q. JUDGE	.50
CULTURE OF CONCENTRATION, by W. Q. Judge, paper	.10
DREAM OF RAVAN, cloth	1.00
ESOTERIC BUDDHISM, by A. P. Sinnett, cloth	1.25
FIVE YEARS OF THEOSOPHY	3.25
FRAGMENTS, by Cavé	.60
FROM THE UPANISHADS, Charles Johnston, paper, 75c.; limp leather	1.00
IDYLL OF THE WHITE LOTUS, cloth	1.00
KARMA, by A. P. Sinnett, a novel, cloth	.75
KEY TO THEOSOPHY, by H. P. Blavatsky	2.00
LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME, by W. Q. Judge	
Vol. I, compiled by Jasper Niemand, cloth	.50
Vol. II, compiled by Thomas Green and Jasper Niemand, cloth	.60
LIGHT OF ASIA, by Sir Edwin Arnold, cloth, 75c.; leather	1.00
LIGHT ON THE PATH, cloth, 50c.; leather	.75
MAGIC, WHITE AND BLACK, by Franz Hartmann, M.D., cloth	2.00
MEDITATION, by Henry Bedinger Mitchell	.20
NIGHT-MARE TALES, by H. P. Blavatsky, cloth	.50
OCEAN OF THEOSOPHY, by W. Q. Judge, paper, 50c.; cloth	.75
OCCULT WORLD, by A. P. Sinnett, cloth	1.25
PATANJALI'S YOGA SUTRAS, translated by Charles Johnston	1.25
REINCARNATION, by E. D. Walker, cloth	1.50
REINCARNATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, by Jas. M. Pryse, paper, 35c.; cloth	.60
SECRET DOCTRINE, by H. P. Blavatsky, Vols. I and II, and Index, cloth.	12.50
SERMON ON THE MOUNT, translated by Jas. M. Pryse, paper, 35c.; cloth	.60
SOME MODERN FAILINGS, Che-Yew-Tsang	.10
TALKS ON RELIGION, by H. B. Mitchell	1.50
THEOSOPHY AS AN INFLUENCE IN LIFE, by Archibald Keightley	.10
THEOSOPHICAL BADGES, gold, 2.50; rolled gold	1.00
THE CREED OF BUDDHA	1.50
THE CREED OF CHRIST	1.25
THE PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM, by Charles Johnston	.20
THE SPIRITUAL LIFE, by Archibald Keightley	.10
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND THEOSOPHY, by H. B. Mitchell	.20
THE THEOSOPHY OF THE UPANISHADS, by Charles Johnston	1.25
THROUGH THE GATES OF GOLD, cloth	.50
UNITY OF RELIGIONS, by J. W. Keightley	.10
VOICE OF THE SILENCE, by H. P. Blavatsky, cloth, 50c.; leather	.75
VOW OF POVERTY AND OTHER ESSAYS, by Jasper Niemand, paper.	.15

These and any other books on Theosophical, Religious and Philosophical subjects, can be obtained from

THE QUARTERLY BOOK DEPARTMENT,

159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S., 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

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